

PERSONAL

A recent news report said that policemen were under such stress nowadays, they really needed their own agony column. Why only policemen?

Dear Aunt Ada: I am writing to you for advice because I am at my wit's end. You see, I have been teaching in the same primary school for 30 years, and we have just been joined by two new teachers who regard all my methods as old-fashioned and call me a square. As we are only a three-teacher school it is beginning to get me down. Can you help me?

Victoria N Values

I know how you and many similar teachers must feel, Victoria, but do not worry. You will be interested to hear that Jane Fonda has produced a new book called *The Schism of Spirituality*. You sit in a chair in the corner of the staffroom listening to your personal stereo and swinging copies of *Beats of Beers* in either hand. You will be off the Yaffum inside six weeks.

Dear Aunt Ada: I was away from school for four days and did not produce a doctor's note because I thought that, under new legislation, you did not require a sick note for less than a week's illness. Now the head

tells me that the local authority will be cross. What is my position?

Jean King, Swinshire

Technically you are quite correct, Jean. The head is confusing the issue with Swinshire's own requirement that teachers give at least three days' notice of their impending or intended death. This is so that the authority has time to think up a good reason why the school should not have a supply teacher, and has nothing to do with sick notes.

Dear Aunt Ada: We hear a lot of criticism about sexism or racism in education, but that about ageism? I am a 58-year-old deputy head (pastoral care) and I am fed up of ageist remarks from my younger colleagues like "Hurry up, grandpa", and "Have you spent this week's pension yet, Binky?" What do you suggest I do?

Silas O Grindring

You must resist the temptation, Silas, to wear open-necked shirts, medals, and a sports car or make any other such silly gestures. Why not hum it up? Try going along the corridors in a bath chair, or, in your pastoral role, wearing a large white toga, carrying a shepherd's crook and calling people "my son" or "young miss". Reply to your colleagues' smart-ast remarks



Ted Wragg

with quips like "I'm not talking to you until your voice has broken". The subtle approach is always the best.

Dear Aunt Ada: I am a drama adviser in a large local authority and for the last 18 months I have been given all the redeployments to deal with. Not only am I fed up with being redeployed, but I am losing touch with recent developments in drama. I have asked to be relieved of the job but the

boss won't hear of it. What can I do?

Lawrence O'Toole

This is an easy one, Lawrence. Since you are the county's official redeployment officer you should redeploy the chief education officer as redeployment officer and make yourself CEO. That way you solve your problem and gain a large increase in salary.

Dear Aunt Ada: I wonder if you can help me. I work for an objective research institute dedicated to proving that the private sector can knock spots off local authority schools. I know that, given time, I could prove that comprehensive reorganization was responsible for London losing the Ashes, the Estonian earthquake and poor attendances at some First Division matches this season. Unfortunately the Government refuses to fund my research. Can you advise?

Norbert Jekyll-Hyde
Centre for Pathetic Studies

I know how you feel, Norbert, when everybody and everything seem to be against you. I am sending you eight sure-fire draws for next Saturday's *Book of the Week* and the address of the Distressed Gentleman's Assistance Society who may be able to assist.

Dear Aunt Ada: I am writing to you, esteemed person, in great desperation. I am president of large Japanese robotics company. My company makes most advanced robots in whole world. We were given top secret assignment to produce robots to wreck Russian economy. Two of our most brilliant robots, designed for Moscow, have been lost. The first one is sixth generation model designed to ruin Soviet economy in guise of Education Minister. It is codenamed KJ6 and is programmed to produce hundreds of bizarre ideas bringing whole country to total exhaustion. The second, programmed to be junior minister and to bore Russians to oblivion, has Japanese codename No-Fun-Dunn (translation: death by a thousand yawns). Unfortunately KJ6 has no manual over-ride, and its eyes will suddenly bulge and it may detonate. Our sales manager believes both models may have been sent to London by mistake. Can you help?

B Yamahata
President
Wishiwashi Corporation, Tokyo

The DES tells me, Mr Yamahata, that another of your robots, Botson, has been successfully dismantled, but they have no knowledge of the two you mention.

DIARY

To Birmingham to the annual conference of the Association of Metropolitan Authorities. It is a city to which I've never really warmed, in spite of (or just possibly because of) a brief stint in Parliament representing a bit of it. But I have to admit that it remains far away at the top of the first division of the municipal gastronomic league. The exquisite gift and silver decorations of the Town Hall (which they perversely call the Council House, to distinguish from a less remarkable building next door) were only matched by the excellence of the flet steak and the wines.

The party may be over in other cities, but it's certainly not in Birmingham, which is still in the red. Birmingham is a city to which I've never really warmed, in spite of (or just possibly because of) a brief stint in Parliament representing a bit of it. But I have to admit that it remains far away at the top of the first division of the municipal gastronomic league. The exquisite gift and silver decorations of the Town Hall (which they perversely call the Council House, to distinguish from a less remarkable building next door) were only matched by the excellence of the flet steak and the wines.

Listening to Bill Sowton, the Lord Mayor, going on about the place - "most up-to-date exhibition centre in Britain, finest athletics track in Europe, a convention centre on the stocks to beat anything in the world" - I get the feeling that, in spite of the recession, Birmingham will be dominating the West Midlands for the next hundred years as surely as it has during the last.

I had hoped to meet one or two of the councillors from Bromley to find out how they are getting on with their new, student-marked, A-plus but they weren't there. I was told that Bromley had resigned from the AMA on the grounds that it's a communist-dominated nest of subversives. I found myself at dinner next to someone who didn't seem like a communist-subversive - Councillor Brian Sains, the Conservative education boss of flexibility, and his charming wife.

No doubt over the border in Bromley, he is seen as a dangerous collaborator; he was observed not just talking to me but even more intimately to Councillor Nicky Harrison, who remains the chair of the AMA education committee, in spite of sundry attempts by the far Left in Haringey to dislodge her from her home base.

She's done much, over the past years, to maintain the sanity of the Labour Party in its local government incarnation, at a time when many of her comrades were tearing each other to pieces.

Her deputy, John Pearnan, from Wakefield, conducted the conference with somewhat autocratic wit and

Commie hordes now surface in the second city

despatch - "with your approval ladies and gentlemen, though my word is final" - during the brief periods when Mrs Harrison was called away to more important business.

He's a useful Yorkshire antidote to what might otherwise become a somewhat London-dominated institution. He served his political apprenticeship at the foot of the AMA's overall political boss - Sir Jack Smart, from whom he seems destined to take over the leadership of Wakefield in the near future. Local government is lucky to have him - he nearly went into the Church, but God thoughtfully diverted him to education and democracy.

Mrs Harrison and Mr Pearnan, however, were not the only raving Labour moderates at the conference.

The other was Ms Frances Morrell who threw her considerable weight and eloquence against an attempt by the National Union of Students to persuade the Labour politicians in the AMA to boycott NAB and stop cooperating with the government over college and polytechnic cuts.

The motion was moved in the private of the pre-conference Labour Group by Britain's first student chair of an education committee - Dominic Brady of Liverpool. (If he took his emoluments in the form of a salary at Liverpool Polytechnic, he would not be allowed to be chairman of the education committee - but since the money comes in the form of a student grant, that makes him legal. Even that's at risk. NAB is proposing to abolish the town planning course he's on.)

Above the conference, however, hung the realization that these days Conservative councillors are more important than Labour ones. If anyone can stop rate-capping with all its appalling consequences for schools, it will not be Mrs Harrison or Mr Pearnan or even Mr Sains, but John Lovell (of East Sussex) and Lewis Moss (of Berkshire), and the Tory directorate of the Association of County Councils, who have a meeting scheduled with Patrick Jenkin, the Environment Secretary in the fastness of his redoubt in Marsham Street, when far will fly and appeals be made for loyalty to their Government, in general, and their Prime Minister, in particular.

I trust they remember that the shire counties represent a Conservative tradition at once older, more authentic and more generous than the regions represented by Mr Jenkin, like

I encountered no DES ministers or functionaries in Birmingham, so I was not able to discover just who exactly it is who keeps leaking educational secrets to *The Guardian*. It seems that he (or she) forgot to put a stamp on the last plain brown envelope and was discovered when *The Guardian*, too mean to pay the extra postage, had the scoop returned to sender.

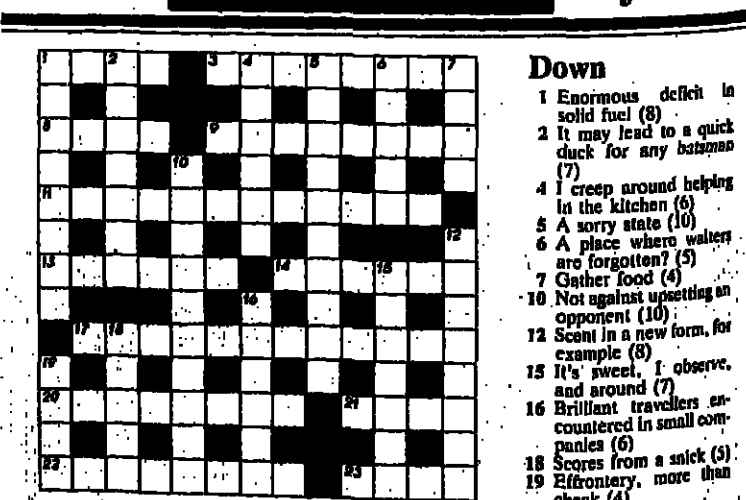
I'm extremely sorry for the unfortunate microfilm, but I do hope the DES hold an Official Secrets Show Trial. It would encourage others who habitually leak documents to ensure that they are properly stamped in future, and do the cause of open government no end of good.

It was only a public spirit leaked from Elizabeth House to *The TES*'s stable companion, *The Times Educational Supplement*, that stymied the Government's plans to nationalize the polytechnics three years ago and remove from them all traces of democratic, local control.

Though civil servants are often accused of being responsible for these leaks, I always suspect ministers. They're always doing it, either in secret conclaves called "unattributable press briefings" or more frequently by just ringing up their Fleet Street friends; and since they're "self authorizing" they commit no offence against the Official Secrets Act in doing so.

Christopher Price

No 127 CROSSWORD by Rufus



- Across**
- 1 Third power block (4)
 - 2 Couple fired to make jewelry (8)
 - 3 A double round to celebrate (4)
 - 4 In distribution of income the company is thrifty (3)
 - 5 You and Eve (6,6)
 - 6 It ensures a good reception for some speakers (4)
 - 7 Descending line in melody (6)
 - 8 He has a small life interest (12)
 - 9 A writer's attributes (8)
 - 10 Study occupied by a college-head (4)
 - 11 Stewing steak, say, is a simple job (4,4)
 - 12 Side hanging the advantage (4)
- Down**
- 1 Enormous deficit in solid fuel (8)
 - 2 It may lead to a quick duck for any batsman (7)
 - 3 I creep around helping in the kitchen (6)
 - 4 A sorry state (10)
 - 5 A place where waiters are forgotten (5)
 - 6 Gather food (4)
 - 7 Not against upsetting an opponent (10)
 - 8 Scan in a new form, for example (8)
 - 9 It's sweet, I observe, and around (7)
 - 10 Brilliant features accounted in small companies (6)
 - 11 Scores from a sack (3)
 - 12 Effortless, more than check (4)

Solution to Puzzle No 126

Across: 1. TUB, 2. COUPLE, 3. CELEBRATE, 4. THRIFTY, 5. YOU AND EVE, 6. IT ENSURES, 7. DESCENDING, 8. HE HAS, 9. WRITER'S, 10. STUDY, 11. STEWING, 12. SIDE.

Down: 1. ENORMOUS, 2. IT MAY, 3. I CREEP, 4. A SORRY, 5. A PLACE, 6. GATHER, 7. NOT AGAINST, 8. SCAN, 9. IT'S SWEET, 10. BRILLIANT, 11. SCORES, 12. EFFORTLESS.

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Unions ignore Government's 3% pay ceiling

by Richard Garner

Teachers' leaders decided this week on a pay claim which would breach the Government's 3 per cent pay target - even without any restructuring of their pay scales.

The teachers' panel of the Burnham committee, which negotiates pay, decided on Wednesday to back the National Union of Teachers' demand for a substantial rise from next April, in addition to seeking progress in the talks taking place on salary structure.

A paper agreed by the NUT's executive at the weekend and put to Wednesday's meeting said it would need a 30 per cent pay rise to return teachers' pay to the level set by the Houghton Inquiry in 1974. "A settlement in line with the Government's 3 per cent pay factor would be totally unacceptable to teachers," it added.

The NUT paper laid great stress on the importance of the pay data working party, set up with the local education authorities after last year's salary settlement, which is expected to produce background information for negotiations early in the New Year.

At its meeting last week, the pay data working group agreed that a comparison of teachers' pay with that of 28 categories of occupations listed in the New Earnings Survey would be given in its final report.

The group also agreed to use a job definition of a teacher which says he or she has "to organize, or assist with, extra-curricular activities such as debating societies, hobbies, clubs and similar organizations".

Mr Peter Dawson, general secretary of the Professional Association of Teachers, said this meant teachers "appear already to have conceded" that a job definition - sought by the management during the restructuring talks - is necessary. But the NUT later dismissed this suggestion.

Free meals attacked as 'obscene'

by David Lister

An education chairman has made an outspoken attack on teachers taking free meals in schools, describing the profession as "certainly the most insulated, privileged and statutorily cosseted and protected calling in the world."

Dr David Muffett, education chairman of Hereford and Worcester Council, said: "In the face of a theoretical near 97 per cent rise in the salaries of Mr. Mrs or Ms average teacher over 4 years, I count it as obscene that, strapped for money as the county council clearly is, we should still be held to paying out almost a quarter of a million a year for 'free' lunches as an inducement for teachers voluntarily to take part in lunchtime activities."

He also told the council meeting that he would probably be accused of being anti-teacher and of undermining morale. But that was bunkum. Dr Muffett asked: "How is it that the parrot cry of tattering morale is so constantly being raised? Or is it the truth that is feared? Are all the shibboleths that have been erected really so fragile? My admiration for the dedicated, professionally motivated teachers does not extend to the positions sometimes taken up by some of their representatives both locally and nationally."

Dr Muffett said afterwards he had had messages of support for his speech from heads and governors. However, Mr Laurie Powell, head of Kingstone high school in the county, told his school speech day it was infuriating and demoralising to hear these attacks on the teaching force by the education chairman.

Pupil profiles

The Government's draft statement of policy on pupil profiles will be published next week. Sir Keith Joseph, the Education Secretary, told the Commons on Tuesday.

To speed progress, he is proposing a programme of pilot schemes with support from central funds. He confirmed that the "records of achievement" would be for children of all abilities, would supplement and not replace exams, and would cover both academic and non-academic achievements.



Double trouble: These youngsters present a big problem for staff at Hopfield High School, near Belfast. They constitute 10 pairs of twins, six of them identical. "It must be the air, or the water, or something up here," said a bemused Mr Billy Whiteside, head of English.

Teacher accused of slander

A secondary school head of department has been issued with a writ by a probationary teacher alleging slander.

Now her union, the National Association of Schoolmasters/Union of Women Teachers, is furious with her employers, Ealing Council, for refusing to pledge legal support over the writ.

The union says the writ was served a week after the woman had sat in on a lesson given by the probationer.

Mr John Harding, secretary of the Ealing branch of the NAS/UTW, said: "Local authorities must accept the principle that when teachers act on

their behalf they have a right to defence should the need arise.

"Failure to do so will convince teachers that a whole range of activities that are normally undertaken are in the future far too dangerous to contemplate, such as writing reports on pupils and staff and attending parents' evenings."

A spokesman for the authority said the union was "right up to a point" but added: "Council's opinion at the moment is that we should keep an open mind until the writ is down for a hearing."

THIS WEEK

COMMENT
TEACHERS' BOARD
SCHOOL TO WORK
TEACHERS
LETTERS
PERSONAL
COUNCILS/PRICES'S
CLASSED
46

Bleak future

Biddy Passmore looks at the implications of the latest public expenditure plans.

Left out

Classroom teachers are angry at being left off the new school curriculum development committee.

Dropping out

Philip Vennings on the decline of working-class students in universities.



Platform

Tony Watts on education, unemployment and the future of work.

The new crusade

Why parents and teachers are queuing up for private schools run according to a strict disciplinary code and one man's uncompromising religious beliefs.

Arts/Books

Philippa Whitbread reviews the first two nights of the Schools Prom.

Proms: Betty Tadmor and Michael Clarke examine different aspects of the Royal Dufy exhibition at the Hayward. Television: Sheila MacLeod on *World in Action: The Devil's Advocate*, Brian Morton on Kennedy. Linguistics: teenage slang; the Lisle Letters Careers textbooks.

Resources/Media

Barry Fox on new developments in interactive video; Philip Barrett on the risks of using

calculators in the classroom; Liz Heron visits the Telecom Technology Showcase; Simon Garfield reports on Radio 1's decision to drop talk shows.

30, 43, 44

EXTRA

English: The shape of things to come after the 16-plus ministerial going-over. What about case work, oral testing and interrupted lessons?

29-40

SCHOOLS PROM 1983

Photo report page 5
Review page 26





EDUCATIONAL SUPPLEMENT
Priory House, St John's Lane, London EC1M 4BX. Tel 01-253 3000

Why is the door closing?

Elsewhere in this issue, Philip Venning discusses the evidence about working-class access to the universities (page 14). Stated crudely, the figures show that in the last 10 years there has been a startling decline in the percentage of students from working-class backgrounds among those entering universities. Again, stated crudely they show that, while British secondary schools have been going comprehensive, English universities have been becoming even more middle class.

The question is: do the figures mean what they seem to say? How to interpret the downward trend depends on a number of statistical questions about the collection of information about students and the slow but steady decrease in the proportion of the population in occupations categorized as working class. To questions about the class structure have to be added those arising from the complex changes which have accompanied the increasing ethnic diversity brought about by immigration. As Venning shows, these confounders can be clarified but not solved.

The balance of the argument, however, seems to suggest that, if all the statistical quirks could be ironed out (which they can't), there would still be a significant decline, though less severe than the raw figures imply.

Obviously, the reorganization of secondary education must be a possible factor. During any period of transition you would expect to encounter difficulties. In a period of falling rolls, transition can all too easily become the norm. If the quality of sixth-form education has been lower than it should have been because there are too many small, inefficient sixth forms in comprehensives, this could show up in lower A-level grades and could steer more comprehensive sixth-formers away from the more selective universities towards the less selective polytechnics or colleges of higher education. If this were so, working-class access to higher education would not

have been reduced, though the proportion of university entrants from working-class families would have diminished.

Equally, it could be that comprehensive students, given a free choice, may be more disposed to choose a poly than pupils from selective or independent schools. This could either be from positive preference or because the ethos of the university is thought to be more intimidating.

Another factor which would merit closer examination is unemployment and the effect this may now be having on the vocational choices of sixth-formers. Working-class sixth-formers with unemployed parents must be under greater pressure to leave school if they have any chance of an immediate job. So far, most of the anecdotal evidence on this count has suggested a tendency to stay on, not leave, but there may be no general rule which holds good with all kinds of pupil. The case for better maintained educational maintenance grants, specifically aimed at eliminating the kind of hardship which prevents able boys and girls from realizing their potential, still holds good.

In recent discussions there has been a tendency to discuss EMAs in terms of a general financial hand-out, means-tested or otherwise, comparable with the YTS allowance. In the circumstances which prevailed since Mrs Shirley Williams put forward her scheme in 1978 it was inevitable that EMAs should be seen as an anti-youth unemployment measure. But it is important not to lose sight of the specifically educational need to provide grants to prevent poverty from nipping promise in the bud.

The link between education and social class has been one of the great post-war themes. The study of *Social Class and Educational Opportunity*, by Floud, Haskey and Martin, published in 1956, exercised an important influence on the education debate of the two decades which followed, and forcefully drew attention to the large reservoir of untapped talent among less advantaged sections of the community.

In *Origins and Destinities* (1980), Halsey, Heath and Ridge, showed how much remained to be done. Many of those who supported the comprehensive reform did so in the belief that comprehensive schools would do more to open up opportunity for working-class children who have been so disproportionately likely to miss out.

But the present unsatisfactory mixture of comprehensive and selective schools is not managing to increase the representation of working-class families among those who make it to the top of the education system and for whatever combination of reasons the imbalance is getting worse.

Many people will think this is thoroughly unsatisfactory and look to the politicians, on a cross-party basis, to adopt national policies aimed at nurturing more of the talent which abounds among the 60 per cent of the population which now provides only about 20 per cent of university entrants. In the Buttsell and Crosshairs years such a policy aim was hardly in doubt. Now enough confusion surrounds the present Government's attitude to the secondary schools for it to be important to reaffirm this as one of the central aims of public education policy, and to encourage an open-minded exploration of how to pursue it more successfully than in recent years - even if this means reassessing some of the oversimplifications on both sides of the comprehensive/grammar argument.

There is clearly a need for more, purposeful, research about the particular inhibitions which hold back different groups of pupils - research, maybe, which links up with other studies which might be prompted by Sir Keith Joseph's determination to highlight the needs of the least successful 40 per cent. And for a start, something needs to be done about the chaotic information base on which any policy discussion is to be mounted. Better statistics, by themselves, won't provide answers, but without them too much depends on mere speculation.

COMMENT

Where more means less

The autumn statement on public spending for 1984-85 - and Sir Keith Joseph's gloss on its educational provisions - include the usual battery of statements where "more" means "less" and increases take the form of concealed cuts (page 6).

As usual, the biggest cause of confusion is the Government's use of phoney figures for this year. Because the Government insists that the authorities are "overspending", it puts in its own figure for current expenditure by local authorities for 1983-84, which is some £770m below what will prove to be the actual sum spent.

All talk of "increases" for the next year are increases on the falsely low figure used for this year. Thus, cuts of millions - in the case of education, hundreds of millions - can be spirited away and replaced by what looks more like a standstill budget.

A second note of caution concerns the estimate for inflation and for the salaries bill. A lot depends (as it has done this year) on whether the Government has under or over-estimated for inflation at 4½ per cent, and whether the local authorities will succeed in keeping wage rises down to 3 per cent.

In fact, local authority negotiations don't take place in a vacuum and there is reason to expect the elemental signs of economic recovery to strengthen rather than weaken union negotiations (as witness, the rejection of the Ford offer of 7½ per cent). Whether this carries over into the public service is going to make a big difference to everyone who works in public education.

The third crucial consideration is staffing and, in particular, teachers'



Chancellor Lawson - phoney figures: jobs to balance the books along the lines envisaged by Sir Keith, i.e. a.s. need to shed between 9,000 and 12,000 teachers. L.g.a.s. for their part, look to a reduction of no more than 4,000. The difference can be costed at £70m to £100m. Compulsory redundancy remains a possibility, but not yet a probability.

It would all look a bit better were it not for the unrealistic figures which the DES chooses to use for school meals (£175m below the i.e.a.s. estimate). As for the small line of pluses - they are very welcome, especially those which come within the DES's own budget and which may actually reach their intended destination. The small adjustments in the assumptions written into the Rate Support Grant are of little significance, all being well within the normal margin of error and not earmarked in any way.

joint board of nominated borough members, a qualified welcome might be in order for the DES's new consultation document (page 6). At least (and at last) the Education Secretary and his department have begun to think through some of the consequences for education of the policy decision to abolish the GLC.

Qualifications, however, there have to be. The Government accepts the case for retaining a unitary authority and emphasizes the undesirability of imposing another tier of control between joint board and school governing bodies "which exercise significant responsibilities." But it then proposes to involve the boroughs in ways which would put political snares and traps 'twixt joint board and governors.

There is to be more consultation with the boroughs on budget, broad policy initiatives, and proposals to change, open, or close schools. The status of such consultations is left unclear, and the fact that ILEA's secondary reorganization planning, for example, needs to be organized on a divisional basis, is totally ignored.

The ILEA has been relatively successful in taking out surplus school places (in line with DES policy). If each borough could block closures on its home ground, all reorganizing could be back to stalemated.

The proposal that governors should in future be largely nominated by boroughs (and thus reflect their own political balance) offers the built-in prospect of conflict. If a governing body disagrees with the joint board on such issues as multi-ethnic education or corporal punishment, what confusing effect could that have on the school in its charge? How exactly does Sir Keith see governors exercising their increased responsibilities under the 1980 Act?

If the aim is really to improve standards as well as cost effectiveness there is still a long way to go to hammer

out new workable administrative arrangements for London. Constructing a service specifically designed to be at war with itself won't do the trick.

Once more with feeling

Mr Bob Dunn's weekend speeches are becoming a bit of a bore. The refrain is getting too familiar. He clearly thinks he has got on to a good thing with Conservative Party audiences in stumping the country telling i.e.a.s. to keep the possibility of restoring grammar schools in mind when they review their secondary arrangements in the light of falling rolls.

Last weekend he lit on the Channel 4 opinion poll (TES, November 18) with the evidence it produced that more parents associated better academic results with a mixture of grammar and secondary modern schools than with comprehensives.

Many conclusions can be drawn from this over-simple finding. The one which doesn't stand up is the one Mr Dunn arrived at: that all i.e.a.s. ought to maintain a mixture of different types of school so that, comprehensives and grammar are made to run side by side, in order that the school system should mirror as nearly as possible the internal confusions of an opinion poll.

No wonder, however, Mrs Thatcher gave Mr Dunn a leg-up. After all, when she was Secretary of State her great contribution to the secondary debate was to stand pat on the principle of co-existence - the principle which has produced one of the least satisfactory of all kinds of school, the creamed comprehensive.

This is certainly no way to give parents what they want. Mr Dunn is bogged down in the old sterile dispute about institutions. He needs to move on to what happens inside them.

Second Opinion

Liverpool as the showdown approaches

People have heard of Clay Cross, Liverpool is not a Clay Cross; it is an English city in a near state of rebellion. Liverpool is facing its biggest crisis since the blitz and most Liverpoolians believe that Margaret Thatcher has done more damage to their city than Herman Goering and the Luftwaffe.

They are tired of phrases such as deprivation, social disadvantage, lack of opportunity and stagnation. They know they are poor. The reasons for the decline of the city are many, but the collapse of the port has dealt an economic and cultural body blow to the city.

Liverpool is not a traditional Labour authority. It has deep religious divisions: half the children are educated in church schools, mainly Catholic. When Labour came to power in May 1983, it did so not on a Catholic vote but on a manifesto committed to a frontal attack on monetarism. The present Labour authority starkly presented to the electorate an expansion programme of jobs and services and a commitment to carry it through in spite of Government opposition.

On taking office, the council immediately announced the creation of 1,000 jobs in housing, education and cleansing. This met with obvious popular support. Against all national trends, Liverpool did not elect a single Conservative MP at the General Election; it proved that at the sharp end of monetarism it is easy to pin the blame for unemployment on the Conservative Party.

Now Liverpool is the first major authority openly to defy the Government's attempt to restrict public spending. One can speculate over the future of such defiance. After a demonstration on November 19 organized by the city council and supported by some 25,000 people, Labour leaders publicly restated their intention to carry through their spending plans regardless of the consequences.

The banking community is nervous and says a £27m overdraft is worrying especially when the council is kept afloat with short term loans. The Labour group fears that the banks, in consultation with the Government, will move against the council at a chosen moment which could be a low point in a local election run up.

The implications for teachers employed by a council which effectively goes into liquidation are horrendous. Teachers themselves are not strangers to overdrafts but the thought of an end to monthly pay cheques must chill the spines of most teachers at NUT meetings. The implications are, of course, the closure of schools and the breakdown of council services. Liverpool has a population massively reliant on council services. These services will be thrown into complete confusion and chaos on an unthinkable scale.

Perhaps Mrs Thatcher will sidestep this disaster and treat Liverpool as a special case. But if she does this, the Marxist Labour group will have been seen to confront the government and win. The outcome is awaited with bated breath by teachers in the city who have much to lose.

Jim Ferguson

Mr Ferguson is the NUT executive member for Liverpool.

...no comment

"This course is written with two groups of student in mind. First, the intelligent, interested citizen... The second group of students comprises the professionals - teachers, advisers or administrators."

From the introduction to "The Control of Education in Britain", a report by the Open University.

Secretaries' dispute halts mock exams

Angry by school secretaries in Sandwell, West Midlands, has forced headteachers to cancel mock examinations. Some children are also being sent home because first-aid supplies have run out in schools.

The National Union of Teachers and the National Association of Schoolmasters/Union of Women Teachers are supporting the striking secretaries by refusing to do work which is normally done by them.

The result is that - in addition to the cancellation of mock examinations because the secretaries normally type out the papers and photocopy them - school dinner money is not being collected and hundreds of extra children are enjoying free school meals.

The strike is the culmination of a long-running dispute between the secretaries, members of the National and Local Government Officers' Association, and the council, over their pay structure. Their union says the 250 secretaries are on the bottom rung of the council's clerical pay scale.

It came to a head when as a protest by refused to answer telephone calls last month - and were told that the council would no longer pay them. They continued working but eventually voted two to one in favour of strike action.

The strike has lasted two weeks and Mr Eric Faux, branch secretary of NALGO, warned the action could be stepped up - thus jeopardizing children's examination prospects. So far, the union is exempting public examinations from their actions.

Racism guide

Bradford has issued guidelines for heads to combat racist behaviour in schools. The document will be followed by other guidelines on a multi-racial curriculum (TES, October 7). Heads are advised to keep records on racist behaviour and inform the authority of any incidents.

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Secretaries' dispute halts mock exams

Angry by school secretaries in Sandwell, West Midlands, has forced headteachers to cancel mock examinations. Some children are also being sent home because first-aid supplies have run out in schools.

The National Union of Teachers and the National Association of Schoolmasters/Union of Women Teachers are supporting the striking secretaries by refusing to do work which is normally done by them.

The result is that - in addition to the cancellation of mock examinations because the secretaries normally type out the papers and photocopy them - school dinner money is not being collected and hundreds of extra children are enjoying free school meals.

The strike is the culmination of a long-running dispute between the secretaries, members of the National and Local Government Officers' Association, and the council, over their pay structure. Their union says the 250 secretaries are on the bottom rung of the council's clerical pay scale.

It came to a head when as a protest by refused to answer telephone calls last month - and were told that the council would no longer pay them. They continued working but eventually voted two to one in favour of strike action.

The strike has lasted two weeks and Mr Eric Faux, branch secretary of NALGO, warned the action could be stepped up - thus jeopardizing children's examination prospects. So far, the union is exempting public examinations from their actions.

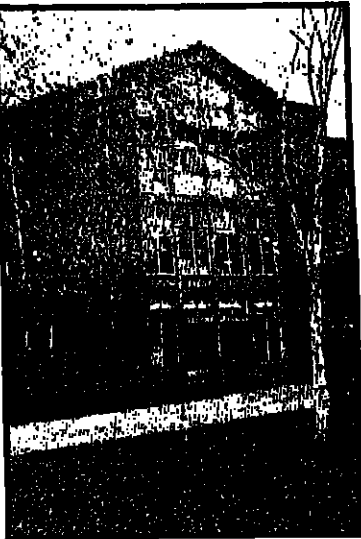
Racism guide

Bradford has issued guidelines for heads to combat racist behaviour in schools. The document will be followed by other guidelines on a multi-racial curriculum (TES, October 7). Heads are advised to keep records on racist behaviour and inform the authority of any incidents.

Bradford has issued guidelines for heads to combat racist behaviour in schools. The document will be followed by other guidelines on a multi-racial curriculum (TES, October 7). Heads are advised to keep records on racist behaviour and inform the authority of any incidents.

Closure colleges get reprieve

by John O'Leary



Hatfield Poly: merger



NE London Poly: reprieve

The former colleges of education were singled out this week for a special new planning exercise as the National Advisory Body completed its recommendations on the distribution of students in polytechnics and colleges next year.

Three days of talks in the NAB committee, chaired by Mr Peter Brooke, under secretary for higher education, produced agreement on a slight increase in the overall student numbers compared with the board's proposals. But another meeting will be needed to finalize details of a new funding system.

No reprieves were given to the three colleges faced with closure or merger, but two controversial departmental closure proposals were overturned. The likely final merger and closure total will be five, the Inner London Education Authority having been given until Christmas to reconcile the NAB plan with its own review of higher education.

Mr John Bevan, NAB secretary, said that Fleetwood Nautical College had been the sixth institution thought to be at risk, but it was now accepted that the college would survive the loss of all its advanced courses.

Nonington College, Kent, is the only institution to be refused any intake of students next September, although both Hertfordshire and West Midlands colleges will recruit only to teacher education courses. Hertfordshire is expected to merge with Hatfield Polytechnic, probably in 1985, but Mr Bevan accepted that the loss of

diversified courses would mean probable closure for West Midlands.

The allocation for Inner London was described as consistent with a merger between Thames Polytechnic and Avery Hill College, although no specific proposal has been put by the NAB. And a reduction in places on advanced courses in the four art colleges is expected to lead to rationalization there. The authority has been given an extended period to make any counter proposals suggested by its own review, but its advanced further education pool allocation will be broken down by institution as in the rest of the country.

One change was made to the board's proposals on town and country planning, bringing about a reprieve for the Leeds Polytechnic department on the grounds that no courses in the subject would have been available north of Birmingham otherwise. The Trent and Liverpool polytechnic and Gloucestershire College of Arts and Technology departments remain on the closure list. A reassessment of the closure list. A reassessment of town and country planning provision will take place over the coming year.

The other reprieve was for the North East London Polytechnic department of architecture, which had been earmarked for closure despite the existence of a transitory group law. The committee agreed that no closures should be considered in advance of the group's report, which is expected to be tabled next autumn.

Almost all the secretariat's proposals for further concentration of courses into the major institutions have been put back by a year. And Sir Keith Joseph, Education Secretary, has agreed the same course for the nautical studies closures at Humberstone College and the City of London Polytechnic.

Two other reassessments have also been scheduled for the coming year, one on art and design courses, concentrating on DATEC provision, and the other a "study of the futures of all colleges engaged or recently engaged in teacher education." Mr Bevan said that the committee was anxious to face the question of the role of the former colleges of education.

● The Committee of Directors of Polytechnics this week issued a statement expressing serious concern at the developing relationship between the Council for National Academic Awards and the NAB. It was threatening the "longstanding relationship of trust and mutual support" between the CNA and the institutions it validated, said the directors. - THES

UGC runs out of new ideas money

by Ngaio Crequer

The University Grants Committee has no money to support academic innovations and has told vice chancellors it cannot support any more new proposals.

The news comes just a week after the announcement of the Government's expenditure plans, which cut the universities' grant for 1984/5 by £17m over the figure projected in July this year (see page 6).

And in Cabinet discussions leading up to the Government's spending White Paper next February, huge cuts are being considered for the universities for the two years 1985/6 and 1986/7.

In a letter received this week, the UGC has explained to universities that it has run out of restructuring money for new projects. The restructuring budget includes £100m for redundancy compensation only, plus money set aside by the committee from the block

recurrent grant. But some of this money was used to absorb the emergency Government cut on the 1983/4 grant, in July.

The restructuring money is for redundancy compensation, the cost of part-time engagement, and new academic developments. The cost of the first two is proving so huge the UGC has said "we shall have no reserve left for distribution either in 1983/4 or in 1984/5." - THES.

FROM HERE TO ETERNITY?

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Nasty statistics on videos

by Bert Lodge

One in 10 nine-year-olds of both sexes has seen the video film *I Spit on Your Grave* which includes explicit scenes of intercourse, rape, castration, wounding and multiple murder, according to a survey on this week from the Parliamentary Group Video Inquiry.

And 40 per cent of all children have seen, at least one video nasty, the report claims. "Horror films have replaced science fiction films in the popularity ratings of children's viewing habits," the report concludes. "This is taking an average of all ages from 7 to 14. Even among those children still expressing a preference for science fiction the outstanding scenes mentioned were the most violent ones."

From a survey which included at least two schools, one primary and one secondary, from every local education authority area, the research group of academics, headed by Dr Clifford Hill and based at Lady Spencer Churchill College, Oxford, found that hundreds of thousands of children have watched films that have been legally declared obscene. The number of these on the Director of Public Prosecution's list has increased from 32 to 46 since the summer.

Among many boys, especially from working-class backgrounds, watching the nasties has become a test of manliness, the report says.

Video violence and children, Part 1: Children's viewing patterns in England and Wales. PGVE Report Office, 58 Hanover Gardens, London, SE11. £3 plus pp.

Part-timers excluded from NUT elections

by Hilary Wilce

Part-time teachers will not be allowed to stand in the current round of elections for the executive of the National Union of Teachers.

The union's executive has decided to refer the matter back to the membership and organization sub-committee for more detailed consideration.

The rule had been challenged by a part-time teacher, Ms Sue Adams, who said that since women made up the overwhelming majority of part-timers, the exclusion amounted to unlawful discrimination.

Her view was backed by the Equal Opportunities Commission, whose spokeswoman said it seemed to be "a clear-cut case".

Mr Doug MacAvoy, deputy general secretary of the NUT, said the executive would be making recommendations to next year's annual conference on whether and how the rule should be changed.

However, some members of the executive are known to be angry at the decision. They feel that since the current elections could be unlawful, a decision should have been taken to change the interpretation of the "full-time" rule to include permanent part-timers.

Vice-presidential election - Page 8

TES essay competition

The TES announces this week the opening of its annual essay competition in which teachers and careers officers can win cash prizes of up to £500 for both themselves and their school or college.

This is the second year the Engineering Careers Information Service has teamed up to sponsor The Times Educational Supplement Engineering Essay Competition. The judges this year include Lord Carrington, the former Foreign Secretary and now Chairman of GEC, and Baroness Platt, Chairman of the Equal Opportunities Commission.

A range of essay subjects includes women in science and engineering and the benefits of school/industry links. Full details on page 9.

PLATFORM

Unemployment is basically an economic and political problem, not an educational one. None the less, it is a problem for education, since it challenges many of the basic assumptions built into the structure of our educational system.

Despite the strong tradition within education which regards vocational matters as being improper educational concerns, the bonds between education and employment are strong. Societies expect schools to develop in young people the knowledge, attitudes and skills which will enable them to contribute to the economy. Young people and their parents, too, expect schools to help them enter a worthwhile job.

Four main bonds between education and employment can be distinguished:

- **Selection** - the examination system which exerts such a strong hold on the curriculum is justified largely in terms of the use of educational qualifications in selection for employment;
- **Socialization** - covering the many subtle ways in which schools influence students' attitudes to the world of work, and adapt them to their own place within it;
- **Orientation** - deliberate curricular interventions designed to help students to understand the world of employment, and to prepare for the choices and transitions on entering it; and
- **Preparation** - the development of specific skills and knowledge which students will be able to apply in a direct way once they are in a job.

Paradoxically, the effect of rising unemployment has been to tighten these bonds. The Grant Debate produced a strong reassertion of the need for schools to prepare students more adequately for the world of work. Such expansion as there has been of education and training provision has been administered not by the education authorities but by the Manpower Services Commission, whose control has ensured that the bonds with employment would be as tight as possible. This has now extended into the new Youth Training Scheme and the Technical and Vocational Education Initiative.

The paradox is not senseless. It responds to the anxieties of individuals when employment is so uncertain. People are more likely to judge educational provision by vocational criteria, and less likely to apply other criteria in the assurance that they will be able to find a job at the end of it anyway. It also to some extent serves the interests of equity: the more people that can be helped to be employable, the more chance there is that unemployment will be shared around rather than confined to particular hard-core groups of long-term unemployed.

There is, though, a further and more covert rationale, which is that it distracts attention from the political and economic causes of unemployment. It maintains the illusion that there continues to be an adequate world of employment to prepare for. Unemployment is ignored, or is used as a motivational stick to beat students with, or is regarded as a personal problem to be "treated".

Yet this kind of response carries with it considerable dangers. It encourages individuals to invest ever more heavily in the desirability of



Tony Watts asserts that any truly creative response to the problem of mass unemployment would have to involve radical alterations to schools' curricula and structures

Redundant approaches to the world of work

securing employment. It does not prepare them for the possibility that they may not achieve their goal. It, accordingly, only exacerbates their likely sense of disillusionment if they fail. Yet it does nothing, on a macro scale, to increase the numbers who will achieve the goal.

The sense of colluding with a deceit undermines the confidence of those engaged in operating the programmes. Teachers in schools, supervisors in YOP/YTS, begin to doubt the value of what they are doing. The time-honoured phrase "If you work hard, you will get a (good) job", freezes on their lips. Yet, often, they are fearful of abandoning it, or confronting the sources of their doubts.

Some, however, are prepared to do so, and to try to find some wider and more adequate ways of responding to unemployment. I recently carried out three case-studies of such schools for the Schools Council Industry Project. All were concerned to do what they could to increase students' employability, both through examination performance, and through teaching job-seeking skills etc. All had extensive work-experience programmes. But all clearly felt that such efforts, though necessary, were not sufficient.

They had therefore added other objectives. One was to pay more attention to "official" alternatives to unemployment, including staying on at school, FE, and (at that time) YOP. The latter included visits to YOP community projects (now YTS Model B1 schemes), and bringing YOP

trainees back to the school to discuss in small groups their experiences of YOP and of unemployment.

Another objective was to encourage students to explore the possibility of creating their own work. In one school this was done in a very practical way by encouraging some students to set up their own retailing company for a time, in an adaptation of the Young Enterprise scheme. Another had set up a production-line and marketing process involving the whole fourth year during a suspended timetable week at the end of the summer term.

The three schools were also concerned to help students to develop survival skills which would help them if, despite all efforts to avoid it, they became unemployed. This included budgeting skills, knowledge of benefits to which the unemployed were entitled, and awareness of local centres for the unemployed; efforts were also made to extend students' awareness of "leisure" possibilities. In addition, there was a concern that students should understand the economic and political causes of unemployment, not least so that students would not assume that being unemployed was a sign of personal inadequacy.

Finally, one school in particular had made concerted efforts to encourage students to think about the future and about the kinds of social changes that might affect their lives. It had done this both through a Year 2000 conference for fifth-year pupils, and through a "Towards the Twenty-First Century" theme in the fifth-year social studies

course. It hoped that this would "mentally gear them up for change".

The balance that a school establishes between such alternatives will depend in part on the views they themselves hold of the future. Usually such assumptions are unstated and untested. Perhaps they should be brought out into the open.

Some people still believe that unemployment is purely a creature of the recession, and that when (if?) economic growth is resumed, it will disappear. There is, however, increasing evidence that this is not likely: that investment for growth will be capital-intensive not labour-intensive, and that new technology and other factors will ensure that, within current policy assumptions, unemployment levels will remain high for the foreseeable future.

In this event, four possible scenarios can be painted. The first is *unemployment* under which we continue to regard employment as the major source of income, status and wealth, and then to deny access to it to large numbers of the adult population. The second is *leisure*, under which those who do not work form a "new leisure class", with a positive status and (presumably) some kind of guaranteed minimum income. Under the third, *employment*, positive intervention is made by the Government to deliver the "right to work", either through job-sharing or through artificial job-creation.

And under the fourth, *work*, fuller recognition is given to all the work

which is done outside employment - whether in the formal economy through self-employment, or in the three informal economies (the black, household and communal economies).

All of these scenarios have difficulties attached to them. The underlying issues are deeply political. What relative value do we attach to work and to leisure? What relative value do we attach to paid work and to unpaid work? What are the forms of work we as a society are prepared to pay for? How are these forms of work to be distributed? How is this distribution to be related to the generation and distribution of wealth?

Unless these issues are explored, we are left with the status quo of the unemployment scenario. And while there can be legitimate dispute about which of the other scenarios is the most desirable, it seems clear that the unemployment scenario is much the least desirable. If society is to summon the courage and energy to find new answers to the questions, many agencies need to be involved, including political parties, unions, the media. But schools, too, must have an important role to play.

The implications for schools of the alternative scenarios are profound. The examination system, for example, is based on the implicit promise that it will lead to employment. So is the notion of compulsory schooling which precedes adult life. If schools have alternative views of the future, they will need to alter radically their curricula and even their structures.

YTS is troubling in this respect. Despite its potential merits, it could - from schools' point-of-view - create the illusion that school-leaver employment has been restored, if in the form of "schemes" rather than jobs. Some schools may find it convenient to ignore the fact that many young people will become unemployed after leaving YTS, and to abdicate the unemployment issue as being the responsibility of the MSC.

And there are many more difficulties in including attention to unemployment within YTS, as we have been reminded by the recent row over guidance from government ministers on the "political content" of YTS and on the need to exclude "matters related to the organization and functioning of society in general... unless they are relevant to trainees' work experience".

High unemployment is now a part of our society. To pretend it isn't there is to be dishonest to young people, and to inhibit society from grappling with it and finding ways of responding creatively to it. Our concepts of employment and unemployment, after all, stem essentially from the Industrial Revolution. So, as it happens, do our concepts of mass schooling. Perhaps, if we are moving into a post-industrial society, both need to be radically rethought.

Tony Watts is executive director of the National Institute for Career Education and Counselling, which is jointly sponsored by CFAA and the Hatfield Polytechnic. This article is based on his book *Education, Unemployment and the Future of Work*, which was published by the Open University Press on November 21, £5.95.

NEWS

Signs of thoughtlessness...

by Nick Wood

Signs warning potential troublemakers to keep off school premises have been put in "hideous" places such as stairwells and offices, it was claimed last week.

Mr Jon Haylett, secretary of the Essex branch of the National Association of Schoolmasters/Union of Women Teachers, was commenting on the county's response to the 1982 Act which gave education authorities the power to prosecute unwelcome visitors.

"One of the ways in which the county council have said they would implement this Act is to publicize the penalties that can be incurred by displaying notices in prominent places. There have followed a spate of ridiculous display points where these

large orange posters have been erected. We have had them at school offices - so that people have to reach the 'nerve centre' of the school before finding they are liable to a £50 fine - and we have had them displayed in windows of buildings facing brick walls.

"But perhaps the prize for the most stupid position for these notices must go to the school where it is prominently displayed on a noticeboard in the staffroom. Presumably, the staff are not allowed on the premises either!"

Mr Haylett, who declined to name the school, said there was a serious side to the union's campaign.

Recently, a gang of youths had burst into a school, threatened a teacher with a knife and thrown fire extin-

guishers at young children.

Essex was failing to spend the money necessary to make sure the posters were clearly displayed at the main entrances to its schools, he claimed.

Mr Tony Jackson, principal education officer in charge of schools, said that the posters had been sent to all heads in the county with the instruction that they should be clearly displayed at suitable vantage points.

He regularly saw them displayed at pedestrian and vehicle entrances to schools. At one primary school he knew of, a post had been put up beside the main entrance to take a poster.

Heads who were having difficulty displaying the new signs should contact the area buildings surveyor, he added.

NEWS

Schools Prom

The ninth Concert Series at the Albert Hall on November 21, 22, 23 featured 1,200 young performers and was attended by 15,500 people.

Review page 26.

Photographs by Janine Wiedel.



North Yorkshire, E.A.S.Y. Band.



Hampshire County Youth Orchestra

Edgar Holmes conducts.

Computers may cut out some paper exams

by Nick Wood

Television screens linked to microcomputers may replace some written question papers as a way of testing the exam candidates of tomorrow, a high-level DES conference on maths for lower-attaining pupils heard this week.

This novel idea was advanced by Mr Derek Foxman, leader of a new three-year project set up by the National Foundation for Educational Research to devise graduated tests in maths for less able pupils.

Mr Foxman said that one of the project's tasks was to devise new ways of examining youngsters.

"The possibility of using microcomputers for test administration will be considered", he told the assembled maths advisers, academics, DES officials and representatives of teachers' organizations and exam boards.

The machines could be used to "prompt" children who got stuck on an unfamiliar word or diagram.

"If we can get them over that sort of hump, they may be able to show us what they can do," Mr Foxman said, adding that the value of such help had emerged from the practical tests carried out with youngsters by the Assessment of Performance Unit.

The project is one of three being funded by the DES at a cost of £200,000 in response to the Cockcroft Report on maths teaching, which found that less able children were "lost" by existing syllabuses and methods of assessment.

Mr Foxman said that the new tests would represent a clear break with the traditions of traditional exam papers.

Instead, pupils would be assessed on

their ability to carry out everyday tasks. For instance, they could be asked to plan a family outing - a task that would involve using a timetable and working out how much could be spent on meals and fares.

The tests would span levels of increasing difficulty and pupils would be allowed to step up to something harder only once they had demonstrated their mastery of pre-set tasks. Certificates would seek to give potential employers a clear statement of a candidate's achievements.

This approach was enthusiastically endorsed by Mr Bob Dunn, the minister in charge of schools.

If every child was to understand maths and show the confidence to use it, maths teaching in schools had to be more closely related to the needs of employment and working life, he said.

The Cockcroft Report's recommendations on maths for lower-attaining pupils were particularly apposite, Mr Dunn said.

"The report draws attention - irrefutably in my view - to the poor deal currently given to those pupils by many school maths programmes and through the use of conventional assessment techniques, despite all the hard work that goes into providing for their needs."

Maths teachers, particularly those who were less committed to their work or less well qualified, would need to revise their approach, the minister said. The Government has recently announced that maths will be a priority subject for in-service training which is being boosted by £2.1m channelled through specific grants.

SHA votes to recruit deputy heads

by Richard Garner

Headteachers have given their union the go-ahead to change its rules and allow deputy heads to become members from the beginning of next year.

Only 26 people turned up to an extraordinary general meeting of the Secondary Heads Association last weekend to consider the move - and only one representative voted against the idea.

Mr Peter Snape, general secretary of the 3,000-strong association, said he felt most people believed the decision was a fair accolade after SHA's council

had given the idea overwhelming support last month. Soundings revealed that only three of SHA's 18 areas were against the plan.

Under the new arrangements, five seats will be reserved on the association's 62-strong council for deputy heads. They will be able to become full deputy headteacher members or affiliate members.

The move has been criticized by the Assistant Masters and Mistresses Association which has accused SHA of "poaching" (see TES last week).

Meanwhile, SHA revealed this week that a chink of light had emerged in the dispute over Labour-controlled Kirkcaldy Council's plan to freeze the post of second deputy headteacher in its five largest secondary schools.

The authority had originally intended that the posts would not be filled once the present incumbents had left but now has agreed to receive specifications from each headteacher outlining the tasks undertaken by second deputies before reaching a decision.

THE TIMES SUPPLEMENTS' REPRINT SERVICE SCHOOL VISITS

In February this year The Times Educational Supplement published a special 16-page feature on School Visits. It gives details on day trips to various museums, the Stock Exchange and historical buildings all round the UK as well as covering Venture Weeks, a "Do-it-yourself Europe" survival course together with tips on how to make your school visits enjoyable occasions for both pupils and teachers. This is now available in reprint form, price £1.00 and can be obtained by sending a cheque/postal order made payable to Times Newspapers Limited (no cash please) to Frances Goddard, The Times Supplements, Priory House, St John's Lane, London EC1M 4BX.



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NEWS

Biddy Passmore on Government spending plans and their sceptical reception

Improvement – or disaster for the needy?



Sir Keith... optimistic
Troubled times ahead for London's new authority

Government plans for involving inner London boroughs in the capital's education system seem likely to lead to running battles between governing bodies and the new joint board which will replace the Inner London Education Authority.

The plans are set out in a consultation paper, *Involving the boroughs in inner London education*, published by the DES on Monday. It reveals that Sir Keith Joseph, the Education Secretary, proposes to give the 11 boroughs and the City of London new legal rights to appoint the majority of the political nominees on the governing bodies of London's schools.

This would mean tension between governing bodies in Conservative boroughs like Kensington and Chelsea and the new joint board of the boroughs, which is almost certain to be Labour-controlled.

Sir Keith also plans to place a formal duty on the new joint board to consult each borough on all matters relating to education in its area. Consultation might be required at least once a term, the paper suggests. Matters to be covered should include the budget (and its implications for rates), closure or reorganization proposals, and broad policy changes and performance of the system.

The board will be required to produce an annual report as a basis for this general discussion, the paper says. It should include schools' and colleges' exam results, staying-on rates and truancy figures. Sir Keith has not yet decided if the minimum ground to be covered should be laid down in regulations.

On governors, the paper suggests the boroughs of the local authority governors for schools in their area and the board one quarter, subject to a minimum representation for the board of three governors at county and voluntary controlled schools and one at voluntary aided schools.

Although Sir Keith proposes to give the boroughs more rights over governors and consultation, he has firmly ruled out any devolution of functions from the joint board. Even the devolution of day-to-day administration would add an unnecessary tier of bureaucracy and weaken the links between governing bodies and the board, the paper says.

The paper has been sent to the boroughs, voluntary bodies, local authority associations and teacher unions. Comments are requested by the end of January, 1984.

Tests for slow learners 'outdated'

by Phillip Venning

Most slow learners are placed on special courses in secondary schools as a result of inadequate, outdated, and confusing tests and with little involvement of remedial staff, according to a project sponsored by the National Foundation for Educational Research. The researchers, Ms Louise Cunniff-Ross and Ms Shirley Winthorpe, looked at the arrangements made for slow learners in 931 schools in England and Wales – 661 of which were studied in detail.

They found that in many cases the process by which slow learners transferred from primary school to special classes was unnecessarily complicated and time-consuming.

Attempts to assess the implications of reading age scores derived from different tests taken at different stages of a pupil's school career and to reconcile the results of a variety of school-based tests and exams and general assessments all took time, the researchers say.

In about half the schools all pupils were re-tested to make sure they had been placed in suitable teaching groups. But many tests were too limited or out of date.

The chief criteria used for grouping incoming pupils were the class teacher's comments on a pupil's attainment and attitude to school, together with reading age scores.

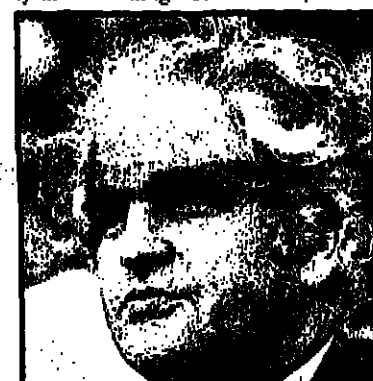
"Relatively few staff, however, investigated other aspects of a pupil's development such as perceptual and motor coordination skills," most identification procedures relied heavily on the results of intelligence and attainment testing.

Many teachers had difficulty finding a reading test designed for pupils aged 11 plus, which was up to date in vocabulary and norms, discriminated at the lower ability levels and which fitted readily into a normal lesson.

The Right Balance, by L. Cunniff-Ross and S. Winthorpe, NFER-Nelson, Oxford Road, East Windsor, Berks SL4 1DF, £4.95.



Nicky Harrison and Giles Radice... 'let down'



Nicky Harrison and Giles Radice... 'let down'

to be paying some 410,000 teachers next January, compared with the DES estimate of 405,000.

A reduction in government targets would mean a cut of some 12,600 in the teaching force by next September. The DES accepts that such a big reduction is unlikely but argues that 9,000 could go if councils were more vigorous about redeploying teachers. L.e.a.s., for their part, say a cut of 4,000 a year is the most they can achieve over the next three years if the secondary curriculum is to be protected.

The plans assume a pay rise of only 3 per cent for teachers next year and spending on school meals of £263m, compared with the local authorities' estimate of £438m. Ministers also expect councils to save more by taking spare school places out of use and to make their school cleaning and caretaking services more efficient.

Plans for next year's spending by local education authorities have been boosted by £177m since the last public spending White Paper, bringing the total up to nearly £9,800m. The extra money, however, is simply education's share of the additional £500m for all councils which was announced in August. (Some of the additional money has gone towards an "unallocated margin" of £625m which is an allowance for the inevitable over-

spending.)

The two largest chunks – some £70m in each case – have been allocated to schools and to non-advanced further education to meet the cost of an expected increase in staying-on. Small sums have also been added to the plans for special education (about £5m), adult education (£2m) and l.e.a. administration (£2m) to help with the extra costs of new legislation. A £20m addition to the "pool" for advanced further education had already been announced.

These allocations are only notional but they are reflected in the distribution of grant to councils.

More tangible are the sums directly controlled by the DES, where a cut of some £23m was originally planned which Sir Keith managed, in discussions with his Cabinet colleagues, to whittle down to £2m.

The main item affected is students' grants, where spending will now be some £13m higher than planned in the last White Paper. This will pay for more grants (because the number of students is bigger than expected) and, for the third year running, a 4 per cent rise in the main rates of grant.

But parental contributions at the middle and upper end of the income scale will rise sharply, hitting especially those earning between £15,000 and

Car vandals busy

by Richard Garner

A teachers' union which has only just begun insuring its members against malicious damage to their cars is being flooded with claims for compensation. The 80,000-strong Assistant Masters and Mistresses Association, began insuring against car damage from July 1, and has already received 126 compensation claims.

Mr Peter Smith, the union's deputy general secretary, said: "The number

of claims on this far outweighs those for other categories such as theft or damage to a member's property."

AMMA members can claim up to £5 for damage to cars – although the first £5 worth of damage has to be met by the individual. The union is insured with the Commercial Union.

The claims include several involving snapped aerials and slashed tyres.

Sir Keith criticized over physics exam decision

by Hilary Wilce

The Education Secretary's decision to outlaw the social and economic aspects of physics in school science exams amounts to indirect discrimination against girls and should have been challenged by the Equal Opportunities Commission, a teachers' conference was told last week.

Ms Margaret Maden, head of Islington's sixth-form centre, told London craft and primary teachers that many girls took up science and technology subjects precisely because they could see their importance and relevance to everyday life. Sir Keith Joseph's ban was a positive discussion to them, she said.

Girls needed to take craft, design and technology not because it was a male preserve that must be broken into, but because it helped to increase pupils' competence and confidence, brought together "thinking and doing", and helped personal, social and intellectual development.

There are three places where an apprenticeship still means something

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NEWS

Teachers' unions angered by curriculum snub

by Nick Wood

Not one classroom teacher has been appointed to the 23-strong School Curriculum Development Committee, the composition of which was announced last week by Sir Keith Joseph, the Education Secretary.

Leaders of teachers' unions were quick to denounce Sir Keith's decision. "Teachers have been disenfranchised", Mr Peter Smith, deputy general secretary of the 90,000-strong Assistant Masters and Mistresses Association, said after learning that the Education Secretary had brushed aside the four names put forward by his union.

AMMA was joined in its condemnation by the National Association of Schoolmasters' Union of Women Teachers, the second biggest teachers' union, whose two nominees were also rejected.

Mr Nigel de Gruchy, the deputy general secretary, said it was "deplorable and unwise" of Sir Keith to invite nominations, only to ignore the names put forward.

His veto of the classroom teacher would only make things more difficult for the committee if and when it came up with controversial recommendations which it wanted to see taken up in schools.

Only the National Union of Teachers, the highest of the three teacher unions, could view the outcome with apparent equanimity. As a mark of its opposition to the demise of the Schools Council, it has consistently refused to put forward names for the successor bodies - the Secondary Examinations Council and the SCDC.

AMMA and the NASUWT also drew support from the National Association of Headteachers, the biggest headteachers' union, which did marginally better than its classroom counterparts when one of its nominees, Mrs Sybil Laver, a primary school head, was named as one of the six headteacher members of the committee.

"We also share the concern of the assistant teacher associations and find it incredible that this body could be set up without an assistant teacher representative", Mr Arthur de Caux, a senior assistant secretary, said.

Mr Smith said he recognized Sir Keith's wish to avoid the "intermediate strife" that bedevilled the deliberations of the Schools Council. Nevertheless, it was "perversive" of him to

"ignore organizations like AMMA and the NASUWT with large memberships in the secondary sector and large numbers of teachers involved in the design and delivery of the curriculum".

It was appalling of the Education Secretary to restrict the teacher element of the committee to heads on the assumption that only they had views about the curriculum. "The consultation exercise has proved cosmetic - the committee's make-up is simply an exercise of Sir Keith's whim", Mr Smith added.

Mr de Gruchy echoed the case put forward by Mr Smith, who emphasized that his union had been keen to avoid "blacky money" nominees in favour of people with the knowledge and experience to make a genuine contribution.

"The Government preaches that trade unions should be responsible and should not engage in party politics. This is something we accept - we do represent the rank and file who take a pragmatic and sensible line. Now we feel Sir Keith has pulled the rug from under the representatives of responsible trade unions such as ourselves", Mr de Gruchy said.

The Secondary Heads Association, which has three members among the six heads on the committee, was inclined to back Sir Keith's decision.

Miss Florence Kirkby, its president and a SCDC member, said: "Heads by the nature of their job have to take an overall view of the curriculum whereas many teachers in schools are accustomed to a particular discipline."

"I would not want to see people appointed because they were, say, good historians or geographers. The curriculum is the responsibility of the head working with the governors. It's a small committee and one could fault any small committee for not having those representatives on it. But if it did it would get too large."

A DES spokesman said that all but the local authority people on the committee had been appointed in a personal capacity.

"They've all been invited to serve on the basis of the individual contribution they can make as a result of their knowledge and experience. No member of the committee represents particular teaching interests."



Cream of the course for overseas trade

Mr Ian Thomas (left), export shipping director with the Milk Marketing Board at Thames Dilton, receives the certificate and £75 Times Supplement prize from Mr Dennis Styles (right), advertising director of the supplements, for being top student on the foundation course in overseas trade at the College for the Distributive Trades in Leicester Square, London. In the centre is Mr David Coulson, deputy head of advertising control at the Independent Broadcasting Authority, which hosted the ceremony at the IBA Gallery in Knightsbridge, London, earlier this month.

Sixth-form colleges score A-level success

by Biddy Passmore

Students at sixth-form colleges continue to perform better in A-levels than the national average. The 1983 results show:

Statistics compiled by the Association of Principals of Sixth Form Colleges show an overall pass rate last summer of 74.3 per cent (75.5 per cent excluding general studies), with one quarter of the entries gaining grades A and B. National average figures have not yet been compiled for 1983 but the overall pass rate in 1982 was 67.8 per cent, with just over 22 per cent getting the top two grades.

The figures for sixth-form colleges cover 78 out of the association's 80 members (there are about 110 sixth-form colleges altogether). All have a policy of open access but students wishing to take two A levels must normally have four O level passes or CSE grades 1 and two wishing to take three or four A levels need five.

In some subjects, all the candidates passed. These were subjects with tiny entries, such as Italian (25), environmental science (17), sculpture, Panjabi/Urdu, Welsh, Chinese and Polish, which had between two and ten entries, and archaeology, Swedish, Persian and Dutch, which had just one each.

The lowest pass rate in a popular subject was in general studies, where only 62.7 per cent of the 5,000 entries got through, but that is because many colleges enter candidates for this subject without much special tuition.

Sixth-form colleges also scored well in Oxbridge entrance: 68 students from the association's 80 member colleges won scholarships or exhibitions in the special entrance exams for Oxford and Cambridge, and a further 340 got places.

per cent of the 178 entries were successful, closely followed by theatre studies (96.5 per cent of 170 entries), classical civilization (92.2 per cent of 231 entries) and Latin (90 per cent of 120).

The highest pass rate in subjects with more than 1,000 entries was achieved in art (83.1 per cent) and chemistry (79.2 per cent). Three quarters of the 4,850 candidates in English got through and 72.3 per cent of almost 5,000 candidates in maths, nearly 30 per cent of whom got grades A and B.

This reflects a continuing recovery after the collapse in demand when overseas student fees were raised. However, this is still an early stage in the UCCA process - only about a third of the expected applications are in - so the picture may change.

Applications from United Kingdom students are so far 6.5 per cent above what they were a year ago, an increase that is equally divided between men and women.

The main increases have been in computing, business management, economics, accountancy, law, geography, civil and electrical engineering, pharmacy, education and architecture.

Meanwhile, the proportion of entrants to Cambridge University from maintained schools and colleges has edged up again. But it is still below half, and candidates from the maintained sector continue to have a much lower success rate than those of independent schools.

Overall, 55 per cent of the 7,700 applicants for places at Cambridge this autumn were from maintained schools and colleges. But they produced only some 47 per cent of the 2,900 successful candidates (up from 46 per cent in 1982). The independent schools, which entered 36 per cent of the applicants, produced 46 per cent of those who were successful.

These results of the latest admissions process come as Cambridge mulls over its sister university's reforms. Oxford does have just agreed to end the post-A level entrance exam, which is thought to favour independent school candidates, and to streamline their admissions procedure from 1985. So far, the only reform on which Cambridge has agreed is to end the scholarships and exhibitions awarded on the results of the entrance exam.

One marked feature of the rise in the share of successful candidates who got in before A levels. It increased from 43.8 per cent last year to 46.6 per cent in 1983.

Women fared slightly less well in the entrance procedure than men. They constituted 36 per cent of the applicants but only 33 per cent of those who were successful.

University applications from abroad up 27%

Demand for university places from overseas candidates has shot up, according to the first figures on applications for entry in 1984.

The figures, from the Universities Central Council on Admissions, show that on November 1 applications from overseas students were up by 27 per cent on the same time last year.

This reflects a continuing recovery after the collapse in demand when overseas student fees were raised. However, this is still an early stage in the UCCA process - only about a third of the expected applications are in - so the picture may change.

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Mr Fred Riddell

The caption to a photograph on page 10 of last week's TES wrongly described Mr Fred Riddell as chief education officer for Nottinghamshire. In fact, Mr Riddell is chairman of the county's education committee.

NEWS

TVEI 'may foster sex differences'

by Hillary Wilce

Girls are in danger of missing out on the major new vocational and technical initiatives in schools, a senior HMI warned last week.

Miss Valerie Evans, divisional inspector for the West Midlands, told the annual conference of the Standing Conference on School Science and Technology, that the Technical and Vocational Education Initiative needed to be monitored closely to make sure it did not simply perpetuate stereotyped education and training.

"In my division I have five TVEI projects. Some are already showing that girls do certain things, and boys do other things. The actual statements about the initiative did not support such an idea, but the practice does."

Miss Evans said she was also worried about the way microcomputers in schools were monopolized by the boys. In one "splendid" school in the Derbyshire Dales she had found, first thing in the morning, crowds of boys around the microcomputers. "And what were the girls doing? Sitting, reading, knitting, doing their homework."

Schools encourage girl pupils to develop characteristics that univers-

ties do not want. Professor Daphne Jackson, professor of physics at Surrey University, told the conference.

Because teachers give far less time and attention to girls than to boys in the classroom as research has shown, girls develop characteristics that are not highly regarded by staff in higher education, Professor Jackson said.

Girls on technical courses tended to be quietly industrious, and rarely to fail. Yet universities looked for students who were outspoken and assertive.

Professor Jackson suggested a range of strategies for change, including giving all girls going on from school to take technical courses a short course on the use of tools and on basic circuitry.

Moves also needed to be made to help girls overcome their sense of isolation in "the men's changing room atmosphere" of technical departments in colleges and universities.

Sir James Hamilton, former permanent secretary at the Department of Science and Education, told the conference that positive discrimination is necessary to persuade more girls into science and technology.

Sir James was summing up a wide discussion of science and girls in schools, in which a number of common pleas emerged. These were for more effort to awaken scientific interest in the primary schools, for some sort of compulsory science and maths up to 16, greater awareness of the general pressures which shape attitudes.

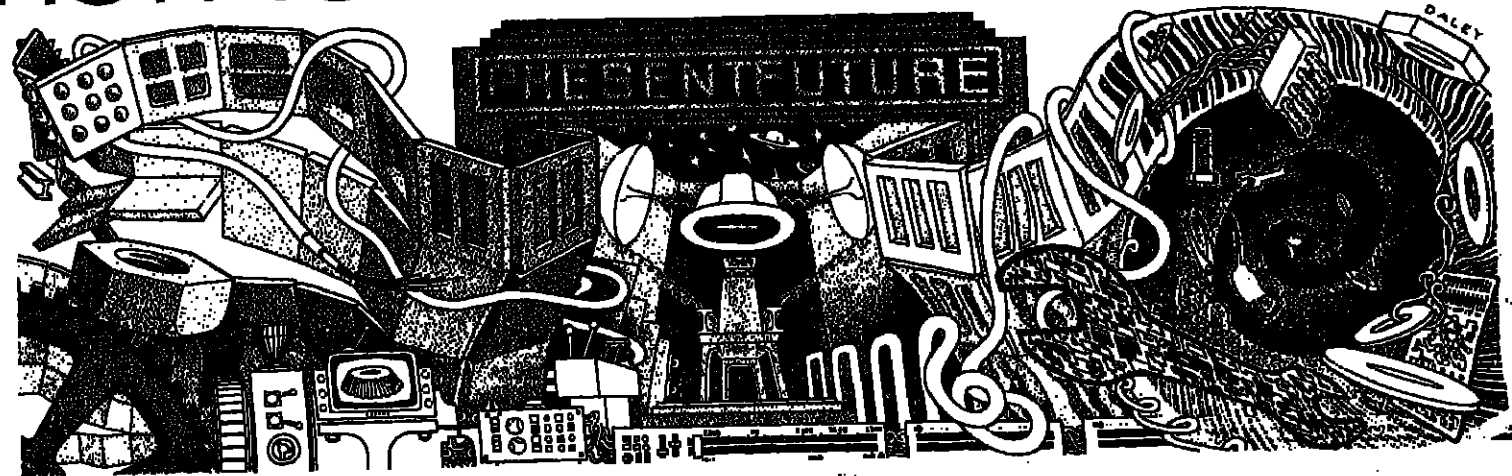
Professor Roger Blin-Stoyle, chairman of the new Schools Curriculum Development Committee, said a friend of his had recently bought a chemistry set for his daughter which showed four boys on the front, conducting or watching an experiment. It was these kinds of influences which shaped girls' thinking from the cradle, and needed to be attacked, he said.

The conference, on the theme "Women into science and engineering", marked the launch of WISE year (see also TES, September 23) and was jointly sponsored by the SCST, the Equal Opportunities Commission and the Engineering Council. It brought together 200 lecturers, teachers and industrialists.



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In addition all winners will receive a copy of the comprehensive edition of The Times Atlas of the World.

The Engineering Careers Information Service was set up in 1976 to provide information about careers in the engineering manufacturing industry. It is sponsored by the Engineering Industry Training Board, the Engineering Employers' Federation and the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions. ECIS produces literature and aids for young people and those who advise them on career choice and provides teachers and careers officers with opportunities to gain experience in industry.

THE TIMES
Educational Supplement

The Rules

1. The last date for entries is March 31, 1984.

2. Entries should be sent to:

The TES Engineering Essay Competition,
ECIS c/o EITB, PO Box 176,
54 Clarendon Road,
Watford, Herts WD1 1LB.

3. Every entry should be headed by the entrant's full name and address. Entries from teachers should give the name and address of their school or college, those from careers officers their present position and employer.

4. All entries become the copyright of the organisers of the competition, Times Newspapers Ltd., and the Engineering Careers Information Service who may reproduce any entry in whole or in part.

5. Receipt of entries will not be acknowledged.

6. No correspondence can be entered into.

7. The decision of the judges is final.

8. Entries must not exceed 750 words.

The Judges

Lord Carrington, Chairman, General Electric Company PLC.
Baroness Platt of Whittle, Chairman, Equal Opportunities Commission.

Sir Richard O'Brien, Chairman, Engineering Industry Training Board.

Terry Duffy, President, Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers.

James McFarlane, Director General, Engineering Employers' Federation.

Dr Elizabeth Laverick, Deputy Secretary, Institution of Electrical Engineers.

Ronald Stevenson, Director, Engineering Industry Training Board.

Stuart Maclure, Editor, Times Educational Supplement.

Bob Doe, Features Editor, Times Educational Supplement.

NUT vice-presidents elected

by Richard Garner

Mr Gordon Green, a Birmingham comprehensive school headmaster and West Midlands executive member of the National Union of Teachers, has come top in the elections for the union's two vice-presidential posts.

Mr Green, 50, who was considered favourite for the post, now becomes senior vice-president - succeeding to the top job at the union's annual conference in 1985. He is headmaster of Primrose Hill secondary school.

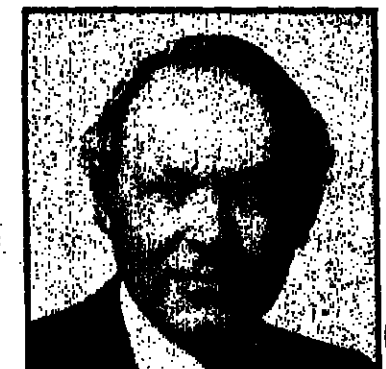
Mr Bob Richardson, executive member for Inner London and chairman of the union's action committee, took second place. This means he will become the union's president in 1986.

Both Mr Green and Mr Richardson, who is headmaster of William Penn school in Inner London and was general secretary of the Inner London Teachers' Association for 15 years, adopted a "centre-left" approach to the union elections - appealing for unity in the fight against cuts in education spending.

The two candidates representing the Socialist Teachers' Alliance, the biggest left-wing grouping at the union's annual conference, came fourth and fifth respectively - although one of their candidates, Ms Carole Regan, who is treasurer of the Inner London Teachers' Association and was the only woman candidate standing, pushed Mr



Gordon Green



Bob Richardson

Brian White, the Dorset executive member, hard for third place on the first ballot.

The results of the first ballot - which was conducted by the Electoral Reform Society - were as follows: Mr Gordon Green 11,540; Mr Bob Richardson, 10,100; Mr Brian White, 7,642; Ms Carole Regan, 6,426 and Mr Ken Jones, 3,564.

In a separate election for the post of union treasurer, Mr Don Winters, the current president of the NUT, beat off three rivals - while means he takes over from Mr John Gray, who is seeking re-election, after next year's conference.

His closest rival was Ms Margaret

Raff, the executive member for Hampshire, who is on the left of the executive. Mr Harry Dawson, executive member for Sheffield, came third, while the Socialist Teachers' Alliance candidate, Ms Hilma Kean, finished bottom.

The results were: Mr Don Winters, 16,890; Ms Margaret Raff, 11,064; Mr Harry Dawson, 6,513 and Ms Hilma Kean, 5,562.

The conclusion of these elections now paves the way for the union's biennial elections - at which at least one third of the 43-member executive will not be seeking re-election. Nominations for the executive elections close on December 15.

16-plus art 'undervalues design'

Not enough attention is paid to design in the proposed 16-plus national criteria for art and design, Sir Keith Joseph, the Education Secretary, said this week in a letter to the Secondary Examinations Council.

The art and design criteria are one of eight subject criteria being considered by the SEC as a basis for advice on the feasibility of a joint exam at 16-plus.

In his comments on the criteria (see TES, November 11), Sir Keith says that the minimal attention paid to design in the "aims" of the exam was at odds with the report accompanying the statement "which identifies the essential element of designing as the ability to research, select, make and evaluate in a continuum."

The assessment objectives would need to be expanded to include a statement that all candidates would need to demonstrate such design skills.

The letter to the SEC also suggests that in non-practical syllabuses candidates should be expected to demonstrate factual knowledge, and questions whether syllabuses such as those in history and appreciation will provide appropriate challenges for both the most and least able.

NEWS

Commons row over college sale

The marketing and selling of Hamilton College of Education in Lanarkshire was pushed through against advice from the Government's legal and valuation experts.

The result, according to at least one MP, can only be described as "the sale of the century."

Details of the much criticized sale were disclosed last week during one of the longest sessions of the powerful Public Accounts Committee in the Commons. During the two and a half hours of questioning, Mr Angus Mitchell, secretary to the Scottish Education Department, and his colleagues revealed that:

- The marketing and timing of the sale was criticized by Scotland's chief valuer, whose own valuation of the college buildings was £6m – nine times the final selling price;

- The method of selling was contrary to advice from the Scottish Development Department's estates experts;

- The sale ignored the recommendations of the Holiday procedures, drawn up after the public outcry over another sale of publicly-owned property, Glasgow's Rob Royston Hospital.

The committee session will not rate as one of the SED's happiest memories. Labour MPs expressed sympathy for "officials stretched on the rack," while Conservative members agreed it must have been "an uncomfortable couple of hours" for Mr Mitchell and his men.

For the department's political masters there was less sympathy.

"Heads must roll," Mr George Robertson, Labour MP for Hamilton, said when the session ended. He singled out Mr Alexander Fletcher, former Scottish education minister, now under-secretary of state at the Department of Trade and Industry.

Mr John Maxton (Labour, Cathcart), a former lecturer at the college, said: "The evidence we have heard points to administrative incompetence or political pressure. I believe this very new and very empty college was a major political embarrassment to Alex Fletcher, and he was determined to sell quickly. The price was irrelevant – speed was the essence."

During the committee session Mr Maxton claimed that the selling price was far lower than most people in Scotland had expected.

That included the National and Local Government Officers Association which would have used the former college as a base for union education courses, thus avoiding the difficulty of getting planning permission for change of use.

"If NALGO had had any idea the selling price would be so low they would definitely have been interested," Mr Maxton said.

The Lanarkshire press has reported recently that the construction company which bought the college residential block is likely to be given outline planning permission for 280 luxury flats.

As the price paid for the residencies



Hamilton College of Education: political embarrassment

meant each flat had cost £1,464, the selling price of £20,000 each would bring a gross income of more than £5.5m. The buyers "are liable to have got a very good deal," Mr Maxton said.

Mr Mitchell responded: "Our discussions with the planning authorities showed they were not willing to give us planning permission for residential areas."

Questions from Mr Robert Maclean (SDP, Caithness and Sutherland) concentrated on why the Holiday procedures had not been used. After the cheap sale of Rob Royston Hospital the use of estate agents had been recommended, but only solicitors had been used in the sale of Hamilton College.

Mr Mitchell confirmed that press advertisements had been placed over December and January, and that the decision not to re-advertise in early spring had been criticized by the chief valuer.

He confirmed, too, that the total cost of advertising was only £12,000 and that included the cost of printing a brochure. The press advertisements themselves had cost around £3,000.

Mr Clifford Judd, a Treasury official told the committee: "If the Treasury had known what opinion the chief valuer had expressed then it would have asked for a report. I must confess I am surprised that the Scottish Office did not raise the matter with us."

Hamilton's educational use page 22

Glue trial goes ahead

The trial of two Glasgow brothers accused of selling glue sniffing "kits" to children – the first of its kind – will go ahead on December 12 at the High Court in Glasgow following a ruling by three judges in the Court of Criminal Appeal in Edinburgh last week that such a charge is relevant under the criminal law of Scotland.

For the court, Lord Emslie, the Lord Justice General, said they rejected the defence submission that there was no case to answer. While it was true that supplying solvents was not a crime, the Lord Advocate had been correct in arguing before the court earlier this year that there was a general principle that acts which might cause real injury to a person were within the category of criminal conduct.

Khaliqu and Ahmed Raja, of Mount Florida, Glasgow, are accused of culpable and reckless conduct in supplying 18 children aged between eight and 13 with "kits" of solvents, crisp packets or plastic bags, tins and tubes in a shop in the city between February 1981 and April this year.

Although the final decision will be studied with interest by lawyers south of the border, it will not be legally binding in England and Wales because of the separate legal systems.

Criticism for special school

An independent boarding school for the educationally subnormal, which was given an official seal of approval in 1970, is the subject of a highly critical report by Her Majesty's Inspectorate.

Holme Park School, Rotherfield, East Sussex, a coeducational school run on Rudolf Steiner's ideas, was recognized as efficient by the Department of Education – an accolade formerly awarded to the better independent schools. But the latest inspection, in June last year, revealed numerous weaknesses in the teaching, child care, and accommodation. Few aspects of the school's work escape critical comment.

The principal complaint is that much of the work of the school, which caters for 38 ESN pupils aged five to 17 plus, is uncoordinated and not sufficiently geared to the wide range of ability of the pupils.

"While all groups experience a range of activities and experiences each week, these do not necessarily appear to relate to the needs of the children." Each teacher worked in isolation and there was little sign of continuity across the classes. A radical reappraisal of the curriculum, entailing substantial modification, was required.

The only real success of the school

was in creative activities such as music, painting, and weaving, which with curhythm had high priority and which worked well. But even these activities required more planning.

Some emphasis was placed on reading and writing, but little consideration was given to their relevance to individual pupils. "Pupils' response was generally unenthusiastic and teachers' expectations were frequently either unrealistic or pitched at too low a level."

Number work was unrelated to real life, and was hampered by an extreme shortage of teaching materials and apparatus.

Each class was too large for effective teaching (in view of the range of abilities), and in the junior group when some pupils were not withdrawn for special activities "the complexity of management problems rendered the teaching and learning situation virtually untenable." Matters had been made worse by recent decisions to increase the age range of the school.

Teaching was undertaken by one full-time and seven part-time teachers, of whom only three were qualified. None had any qualifications in the teaching of children with special educational needs and their previous experience with such children was extremely limited. There were no permanent ancillary classroom helpers – an urgent need.

Child-care duties were carried out by four full-timers and seven part-timers, with widely differing backgrounds and attitudes. "There is an urgent need for in-service training to enhance the skills of staff and to give them some understanding of the development and emotional needs of children is general and children with special needs in particular together with some insight into the special problems of children separated from their families for extended periods."

At the time of the inspection there was no psychiatric oversight, and no proper procedures for assessment and record keeping.

Generally the school building – a country mansion – was inadequate with some specific problems, such as shortages of lavatories and living accommodation for all but senior pupils. The dining room was bleak and cramped. Arrangements for food preparation were unsatisfactory and the level of cleanliness in the kitchen was poor. Outdoors the grounds were extensive but there was no hard play area and possible safety hazards.

Most of the school's pupils are placed by local education authorities. Polytechnics waste too much valuable staff time and effort on admitting students because they do not have a clearing house for applications, the Inspectorate says in a report on construction courses at Leeds Polytechnic.

Leeds Poly, like all other public sector colleges, gave its admissions tutors an unenviable task: "A large number of students are processed by means of well-structured but time-consuming entry procedure involving considerable correspondence and in most cases an interview, to produce a relatively small return in terms of the number of students finally enrolled."

The building degree enrolment pattern, for example, took 10 staff from January onwards each year. After dealing with a very large number of initial inquiries, the team interviewed about 175 students of whom about 70 received firm offers, a number that normally shrinks to about 35.

Though the inspectors are generally happy with the four construction courses they inspected, they do suggest that the heavy workload of some students should be reduced.



Support needed in the classroom

Encouraging travellers

Education provision for travelling children in the West Midlands is more encouraging than in many other areas and far better than it was a decade ago, say inspectors.

The West Midlands service for travelling children has contributed to the development of teaching materials, particularly for reading, and fulfilled an important advisory role, HMI reports.

Service staff, including peripatetic teachers have resisted the temptation to regard travelling children as different in kind from pupils in schools.

HMI reports

HMI reports are available free of charge from the Department of Education and Science, Publications Despatch Centre, Honeypot Lane, Stanmore, Middlesex HA7 1AZ. Also available from I.e.a.s.

Style that discourages slow learners

Shortly after criticizing schools in the London Borough of Sutton for getting good exam results by over-formal teaching, Her Majesty's Inspectorate has made a similar complaint about a school in Devon.

The Park School, Barnstaple, an 11 to 16 comprehensive, achieves above average exam results. "On the other hand the predominantly didactic teaching style in the school is not always effective as a means of engaging some average and academically low ability pupils in their learning."

Some new and well-planned courses had been introduced for less able children in the fourth and fifth year, such as environmental studies and the Schools' Traffic Education Programme. But "with one or two exceptions the performance of less able pupils in mathematics gives cause for concern. There is little practical work and appropriate teaching aids are in short supply. The pupils meet repeated failure and lose motivation which leads to disruptive behaviour in class."

Reading was usually undertaken from course textbooks or worksheets in most lessons. Very few examples were seen where pupils were required to find out information for themselves.

In English pupils had a reasonable range of literary experiences but shortages of course books and materials put a constraint on some of the work.

There were many examples of good quality written work, either class or for homework, in which the material was accurate and the work neatly set out. But "care is required to ensure that academically able pupils are challenged to write more analytically in English on some occasions and that a personal style of writing is encouraged in science."

The standard of internal decoration was generally poor in one building, and the overall impression was one of shabbiness. In the older parts of the school furniture and fittings were unsatisfactory.

Another school with above average exam results, Prince William School, Oundle, Northamptonshire, is congratulated by the inspectors for having achieved so much since its foundation in 1971.

The quality of academic work was generally commendable, and in a few cases outstandingly good. "This is to a large extent the result of thoughtful, skilful and energetic teaching." As a

Building up red tape

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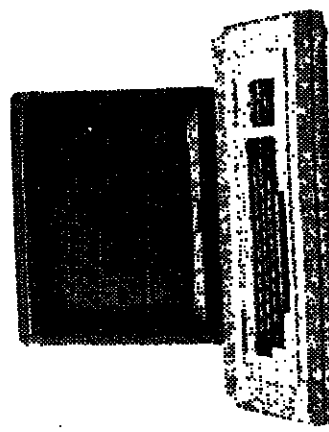
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NEWS

Fewer working-class teenagers are reaching university but, as Philip Venning reports, no one quite knows why.

The mystery of the vanishing students

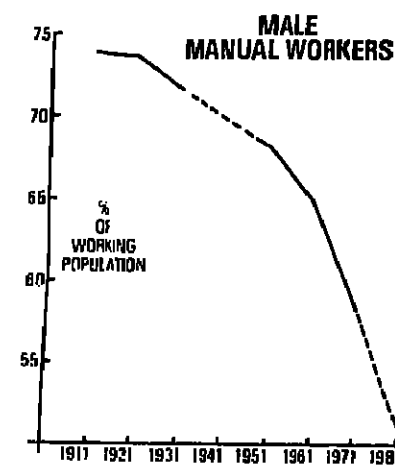
The proportion of working-class students going to university has been dropping steadily for over 10 years, but no one knows why. The decline, which has crucial implications for future numbers in higher education, has occurred with little specific research into the possible reasons.

On the face of it a fall of about one third in the proportion of the university entry coming from working-class homes is extremely serious. The coincidence of this fall with the extension of comprehensive reorganization and the elimination of grammar schools is too striking for the political implications to be ignored. These statistics have now become part of the history of facts and near facts used by the National Council for Educational Standards, as for example in a letter to *The TES* by Professor Anthony Flew (September 9, 1983).

All the likely explanations are so tangled with statistical complications that any simple conclusions are impossible. On the evidence, no one can say categorically that comprehensives are, or are not, to blame.

Through a fall in the figures is undeniable (see graph) statistics are unclear about how much is to be attributed to real changes in the attitudes, choices and qualifications of working-class pupils, and how much to such external statistical factors as the decline in the proportion of the population in what the statisticians categorize as the "working class".

There is no reason to believe universities have become more reluctant to admit working-class students. Figures from the Universities Central Council on Admissions show that applications from working-class students have declined at more or less the same rate as admissions. In fact universities traditionally have admitted a slightly smaller proportion of their working class applicants than of applicants from middle and upper class background, but this, they say, is because students have always tended to have less good A levels.



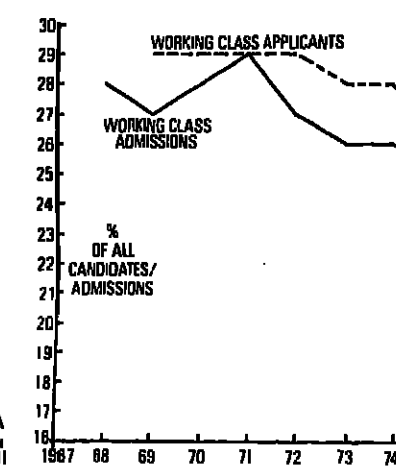
The main difficulties arise over the various definitions of "working class" and the fact that there have been changes in the way the figures have been collected.

The Robbins Report, for example, contains statistics showing that between 1928 and 1947, 23 per cent of all university students had fathers with manual jobs. This had risen to 25 per cent in 1955 and in 1961. But these figures cannot be directly compared with the more recent, and complete, ones produced by UCCA.

UCCA first began giving details of the background of home candidates in 1968. They were based on the description of father's occupation, given by

each student on his or her UCCA form. But nearly 10 per cent of all forms contain an inadequate entry and are therefore excluded, creating "a considerable margin of error".

Because it was originally felt that these descriptions were too vague to fit the "social class" categories devised by the Registrar General, UCCA opted instead for a classification based on

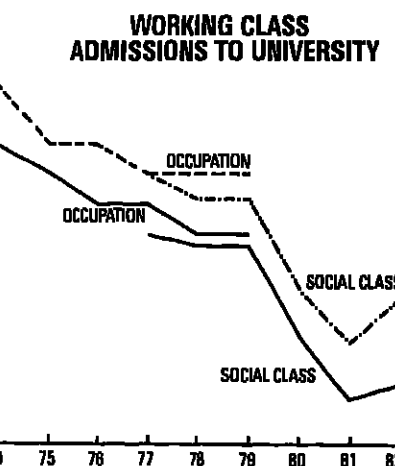


"occupation", which is normally a fairly close proxy.

Occupations 1 to XX (out of 27 groups of occupations drawn up by the Registrar General) include most of the jobs that are agricultural and manual, skilled and unskilled. But some descriptions are notoriously ambiguous.

In spite of these caveats, the fall in the proportion of working-class candidates admitted to university from a peak of 29 per cent in 1970 to 23 per cent in 1979 is unquestionable, even if the precise figures may be a percentage point or two up or down.

It is also clear that the decline is



difference - the trend line has only shifted slightly.

Can a fall of about a third in the proportion of working-class students in the space of 10 years be explained solely by demographic factors?

It might be fairly straightforward to calculate the decline in the proportion of people in the working class, but here again changes in the way the figures are collected and presented thwart simple comparisons. There are also questions about which is the most appropriate measure - the social class of men aged 45 to 59, for example (the figures used by UCCA as those most relevant to the fathers of university students); or the social class at birth of the population 18 years earlier?

The Census gives the most reliable information but the 1981 figures are only just becoming available.

As the graph shows, the proportion of male manual workers in the working population has been falling steadily since 1921. If the trend is extrapolated from 1971 to 1981, this would suggest a 10-year drop from 59 per cent to about 53 per cent, or about a tenth. Other figures, using a somewhat different definition, produced by Mr John Far-

rant of Sussex University indicate that the proportion of manual workers dropped from about 64 per cent in 1971 to under 59 per cent in 1981 - also a fall of about a tenth.

Just to underline the perverse complications of the figures, a rather different picture emerges from those on the social class of people born between 1959 and 1964, who include the bulk of students admitted from 1971 to 1982 (see table). Far from declining, the proportion of working-class children (using the same Registrar General classes I-III, IV, and V) born in that period was a constant 73 per cent. The main fall, which will coincide with the decline in the 18-year-old population, is still to come.

Whichever figures are chosen, it is obvious that so far the size of the working class has not been shrinking fast enough to account wholly or even largely for the fall in university entry. Other explanations are needed.

It could be argued that as competition has become more intense in the last three or four years fewer working-class candidates have even considered university because of inadequate A levels, ignoring the fact that most applications are made before A levels are taken, such limited UCCA figures as there are on A level grades achieved by candidates of different social class do suggest a slight deterioration in working-class A-level scores.

If this is so, it could be that working-class sixth-formers and college applicants have been turning increasingly to polytechnics and public sector higher education. Unfortunately there are no figures to confirm or refute this.

The other possibility is that there has been a reduction in the proportion of working-class school-leavers either well enough qualified or motivated to apply for any form of higher education. In the former case this may say something about Britain's schools; in the latter about changing attitudes among young people. Either way there is just not enough evidence for any firm conclusions, but enough to arouse a host of continuing questions.

Shires in training costs battle

The Association of County Councils is trying to find out how much the Youth Training Scheme is costing the county education services. It has asked all its members to provide details of the financial effect of participating in the scheme this year - details which are likely to show a total loss of many million pounds.

The association will use the figures to argue for a better deal from the Manpower Services Commission and the employers for next year. Although the Education Secretary told Devon council's Tory leaders recently that YTS commitments might be taken into account in fixing next year's education spending limits, the authorities strongly doubt whether this will cover the sort of deficits they fear. And they do not believe that much of the extra £10m the Government is providing in the rate support grant for non-advanced further education will be available to subsidize the YTS.

At next week's meeting of the association's education committee, Devon's representatives will report on the acute financial crisis which its YTS losses have produced. The county puts its current YTS deficit at £265,000, but suspects that its colleges have incurred other hidden losses as a result of earlier long-term planning for the scheme.

The meeting is likely to be told that most authorities are losing heavily on the scheme and some are confronted with the choice of making crisis cuts in their overall education spending or incurring government financial penalties for going over their limit.

Local authorities now have little hope that the Education Secretary will provide them with extra money next year to help subsidize their Youth Training Scheme provision. Many of the councils are now faced with incurring spending penalties this year unless they can find some way of

meeting their YTS losses by cuts in overall college spending or elsewhere in the education service. And as Mr David Young, Manpower Services Commission chairman, made plain to *The TES* this week the MSC is not going to come to their aid this year, and is making no promises for next.

Oxfordshire fills only half its YTS vacancies

By Nick Wood

Mr Tim Brighouse, chief education officer for Oxfordshire, has spelled out the difficulties that have bedevilled the launch of the Youth Training Scheme in his county.

At the latest count, only just over half of the 2,800 places on the scheme have been filled, in part because many youngsters have not bothered to turn up for interview.

"During much of July and August, considerable numbers of young people contacted the careers service to discuss jobs and YTS, but there was a depressingly high number of young people who failed to keep appointments, not only with the careers service, but with the scheme sponsors, who were understandably upset. These, of course, had to be followed up and in some cases the absentee had found a permanent job. Others had been accepted on more than one scheme", Mr Brighouse says in a report submitted to the further education sub-committee last week.

Demand for places has also been lower than expected because youngsters are finding it easier to get full-time work, Mr Brighouse says. He is also extremely critical of the way in which the scheme has been set up.

The last-minute nature of much of the planning, allied with unforeseen changes by the Manpower Services Commission in the scope of courses,

have made it very difficult for careers officers to brief fifth-formers on the options available.

"The staff of the careers service have very little precise information to give to pupils in the fifth form of schools at the formative period when they with the parents were making decisions. The information in its final form needs to be available by Easter at the latest."

And nobody yet knows, says Mr Brighouse, what changes will be made

by the MSC for next year, although it is expected that there will be fewer Mode B2 schemes and more Mode A. Mr Brighouse gives a warning that this will have important financial implications because Mode A fees are discounted to allow for offsetting savings on the traditional part-time courses which the YTS is supposed to replace.

But Mr Brighouse predicts that next year the scheme will run more smoothly and ease the summer log jam that this year put enormous pressure on careers staff.

"The true test of the YTS will be the quality of the training young people receive and their employability at the end of the scheme. If significant numbers fail to obtain employment once their year is completed, the scheme could have low credibility in the eyes of both young people and their parents", his report says.

In a separate report, intended for the Association of County Councils, he gives a warning that uncertainties surrounding the funding of next year's courses pose a grave threat to the quality of courses and the scheme's wider reputation.

Edited by Mark Jackson



Tim Brighouse



Elizabeth Rees

Missing Link trainees

Link, the private training company which set out to provide 18,000 YTS places this year, has filled fewer than 7,000 of them.

Mrs Elizabeth Rees, its managing director, said this week she hoped the company would still break even this year and be able to increase its target next year. She blamed the shortfall partly on the fact that Link's places in most parts of the country became available later than many of the other schemes, and said she still believed that its high standards would make it a popular choice for trainees in future.

Until then, the organization, which already works on a very tight margin - it sends its trainees to local authority colleges rather than trying to train them cheaply itself - would survive by reducing its own costs still further, mainly by cutting the hours of its part-time staff.

Sight and Sound, the office training company, said it had filled around 80 per cent of its places but did not yet know whether it would make a profit this year.

L.e.a.s frustrated by lack of funds for adults

by Diane Spencer

Local education authorities are disappointed by the Government's failure to provide funds for the Manpower Services Commission's strategy for education and training for adults, a conference in London was told last week.

Mr Peter Clyne, assistant education officer at the Inner London Education Authority, said that employers could not be expected to bear the full cost of retraining, but the big question was "Who will?"

Money was needed for travel and child care costs and equipment. All these were core costs, he said. "But we are not convinced that we will be given the tools necessary to do the job", he added.

Mr Clyne, who was speaking at a meeting of the Association of Vice Principals of Colleges, said he was firmly opposed to training loans. He pointed out that only 34 per cent of the

population had bank accounts and it was the other 66 per cent who were the target group in the New Training Initiative.

The Government should introduce paid educational leave, establish a proper legal basis for further education and change the 21 hour rule, he said.

L.e.a.s were not convinced that the MSC could give a lead in adult education and training, although it had a crucial role in acting as a catalyst and a funding agency.

Mr Geoffrey Holland, director of the MSC, told the conference earlier that "learning opportunities were accessible and attractive to employers and individuals: the customers".

Demand for adult education remained unsatisfied because of lack of information. Better collaboration at national and local levels was needed, he said.

Basic skills urged for journalists

by David Lister

Colleges which run journalism courses were accused this week of "stiffing students with sociological jargon" and forgetting to teach them the basics.

Mr Arnold Hadwin, editor of the *Bradford Telegraph and Argus*, told a conference on journalism training that the colleges were exercising insufficient discipline over their students, and giving them a false impression of their value to future employers.

He said that training in colleges has lacked discipline largely because the industry has little control over it. With its failure rates of around 60 per cent on pre-entry courses and 42 per cent in the proficiency test, it was little wonder that groups like Westminster Press had set up their own schemes.

Mr Hugh Probyn, dean of faculty at Preston Polytechnic, said an enormous revolution was already going on to improve college journalism courses.

school-leavers who do not wish to go on to higher education.

Anyone involved in careers education who is searching for a useful guidebook to take them through the minefield of career terminology should get a copy of *Keywords in Education, Training and Work* (Careers Consultants Ltd, Richmond, £2). It also provides a good basis for timetable career sessions.

Confusion also seems to exist among some applicants for courses of higher education, particularly those aiming for places at Goldsmiths College, University of London. All bachelor degree courses there, including the BEd, are now applied for through the Universities Central Council on Admissions - but not the two art and design courses.

Changes of a social, technological and employment nature are also the subject of a conference to be held at King Alfred's College, Winchester from December 12 to 14. Details from the Institute of Careers Officers, 27a Lower High Street, Stourbridge, West Midlands.

Careers Diary

by Brian Heap

Opportunities for sponsorship by industry or commerce are there for the taking by university applicants. A typical offer is that being made by a large glass people - with long accounts, accountants, marketing and women and engineers (details from their head office at Prescott Road, Bolton).

Technology can be confusing, for some firms advertise "commercial apprenticeships" for those interested in business studies. In the past more than one of my sixth-formers has hesitated, thinking that these are for engineers only, simply because they are called "apprenticeships".

Technicians, too, are also identified solely with engineering - of which they are a fairly important part. 9 per cent of the total in engineering employment. They are established at an intermediate level between the one hand, and the professional scientist and technologist on the other (although many engineering technicians do work at a more senior level).

However, in recent years technician level has taken on a wider meaning. Accounting technicians have their own institute, as do architecture and surveying technicians, and in all cases it is possible to move up to more professional levels by taking the appropriate examinations. It is a career structure which opens many doors for those

NOTICEBOARD

PEOPLE...

SCHOOL APPOINTMENT
Miss Wendy Thomas is the new headteacher of Downs Side primary school, Hackney, East London.

UNIVERSITY APPOINTMENT
Professor Daphne Jackson, head of physics, University of Surrey, to be president of the Women's Engineering Society.

ADMINISTRATIVE APPOINTMENTS
Dr Peter Williams to be director of the education programme in the Commonwealth Secretariat from next July. Colonel Colin Kirby to be company secretary and chief administrative officer of the Church Schools Commission of the National Union of Teachers, to be president of the European Trade Union Committee for Education.
Mr Charles Garrett, deputy chief education officer, Birmingham, to be chief education officer, Buckinghamshire from March 1, on the retirement of Mr Roy Harding.

CONFERENCES...

December 3
A conference for teachers interested in job-sharing organized by the Hacking Job-Sharing Project in cooperation with the Inner London Teachers' Association at Penton Primary School, Ritchie Street, London N1. Further details from the school.

December 7
Business Education Liaison Panel conference on "Schools and Industry: The Way Ahead" at Bury St Edmunds. Details from the Area Education Officer, Shire Hall, Bury St Edmunds IP33 2AN.

December 9
North East London Polytechnic has organized a conference on "The Evolution of a Binary System of Education - 20 Years on", at the Royal Festival Hall. Speakers include: Sir Tony Weaver, Sir Peter Swinnerton-Dyer, Mr John Bayan, and Mr Gary Fowler. Application forms from Mr C. Hines, Deputy Director, North East London Polytechnic, Romford Road, London E15 4LJ.

EVENTS...

December 9 - January 9
An exhibition of paintings by Gordon Faulds, Spitz and Michael Kerr in the Dixon Gallery, University of London Institute of Education, 20 Bedford Way, London WC1.

January 17
First in a series of 10 lectures on "Cross-Cultural Psychology" to be held at the Extra-Mural Centre, 32 Tavistock Square, London WC1 on Tuesdays from 6.30pm-8.30pm. Details and application forms from Margherita Veltri, Room 255, Department of Extra-Mural Studies, 26 Russell Square, London WC1B 5DP.

November 23-January 15
Exhibition of young designers' work submitted by 60 art colleges and polytechnics at the Barbican Art Gallery, Silk Street, London EC2. Special rates available for pre-booked school parties - contact Irene Stanley 01-584 5020.



An educational competition for young people focusing on development issues has been launched by UNICEF. Project Nigeria is open to schools and youth groups and involves different tests for each age range (5-11, 12-16 and 16 and over). On registration participants will receive a background pack of information on Nigeria and UNICEF, and teachers' notes setting out guidelines on how to organize the project. Closing date: June 29 1984. Details and registration forms from the Education officer, Project Nigeria, UK Committee for UNICEF, 55 Lincoln's Inn Fields, London WC2A 3NB.

December 9
UNICEF "Light a Candle" ceremony with carol singing - to mark the publication of the *State of the World's Children* report - in the Piazza, Covent Garden at 5pm. Schools wishing to attend should contact the Education Officer, UK Committee for UNICEF, 55 Lincoln's Inn Fields, London WC2A 3NB.

RECENT PUBLICATIONS...

Greater Manchester Primary Contact, a special 260-page issue on microcomputers and the impact of the new technology on primary schools is now available from R Fairbrother, Didsbury School of Education, Manchester Polytechnic, 799 Wilmslow Road, Manchester M20 8RR at £4.75 including postage. Cheques should be made payable to Manchester City Council.

Welsh Historian is a new educational magazine to be published biannually by the Association of History Teachers in Wales. The first edition in January will include an assessment of the new 16-plus syllabus in history, a new series on museums in Wales, a survey of new resources for history taught through the medium of Welsh and a report on the educational facilities of the Cymuned Archives Service. Inquiries to the Secretary, Association of History Teachers in Wales, Llanishan High School, Heol Mr. Llansilan, Cardiff.

INFORMATION WANTED...

A lecturer at Preston Polytechnic is undertaking a research investigation into how young people with physical handicaps secure places in higher education. He would like to contact any such young people who are applying to enter higher education next autumn and who have so far attended non-specialist schools. Please write to Ann Hurst, Preston Polytechnic, School of Combined Studies, B Block, Corporation Street, Preston PR1 2TQ.

Leicester Polytechnic Centre for Postgraduate Studies in Education and Research would be grateful for information from teachers of art and design or the performing arts with experience in either teaching children from non-European backgrounds or teaching a culturally pluralistic curriculum. Teachers willing to contribute are asked to write to AIMS Project (Art and Design Education for a Multicultural Society), Leicester Polytechnic, Scepterpoint Campus Scepterpoint, Leicester LE7 9SU, describing briefly the main features of their approaches and practices as referring to art and design. All teachers who contribute will be kept informed of developments and outcomes.

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OVERSEAS

Privileged, but alive to perils

Brian Catchpole on the European Council of International Schools conference

For those of us accustomed to the threats of falling rolls, mergers, closures and potential job losses, contact with the 1,500 teachers attending the annual conference of the European Council of International Schools in Rome last weekend came as a refreshing contrast.

Teachers in such schools not only escape the worst of these threats, but also have access to exciting developments like implementing the International Baccalaureate, and to such extras as specialist foreign travel for their pupils.

ECIS has offered a service to expatriate children since its foundation in 1965. Some would argue that it should be known as the World Council of International Schools since its membership includes more than 120 independent primary and secondary schools from Moscow to the Canaries, Prague to Aberdeen.

Though it is hard to generalize about such variety, the common language for teaching most students is English and children of all nationalities are admitted on a funding apart - a non-selective basis.

ECIS teachers are aware of their privileges, but remain alive to the perils of student disenchantment and staff "burn-out".

Not to be thought complacent, the conference showed its commitment to the teaching of nuclear power and arms control. Three workshops examined ways of developing positive alternatives to alcohol and drugs. And concern focused on the problem of linking the achievement of academic excellence with the increasingly specific entrance requirements of higher education institutions around the world.

Britain's Brian Heap advised on subject misconception - a real problem for schools in distant places offering traditional O and A level courses - and to explain the radically changing course content in the United Kingdom and North America, the relative popularity of specific courses and the graduate opportunities these offered.

Dr Harry Chasty explained the problem of dyslexia by connecting related developmental effects in laterality, sequencing, short-term memory and faulty perception - all of which cause language retardation and, inevitably, behavioural difficulties.

ECIS teachers appreciated his emphasis on making the best of inadequate literacy skills and the successful remedial techniques practised by learning difficulties specialists in Britain.

But Dr Douglas Heath, Professor of Psychology at Haverford College, Pennsylvania, struck the most responsive chord in his teacher audience when he spoke of problems of morale in schools.

He submitted, that although it was easy to throw money at education to help it through specific difficulties, this did not solve the problem of morale.

Brian Catchpole is the former dean of faculty and director of the school of teacher education, Hull College of Higher Education.

How Congress killed tax credits

UNITED STATES

Peter David on a Senate defeat for President Reagan

President Reagan suffered a stunning defeat last week when the Republican-controlled Senate voted against one of the central features of his education policy - a proposal to give tax refunds to parents who send their children to private schools.

After an angry debate, the Senate, worried about the cost of the proposal and its impact on state-run schools, voted by a decisive 59 votes to 38 to kill the controversial measure.

President Reagan worked hard before the debate to win supporters for the plan. To key senators, he denied charges that tuition tax credits for fee-paying schools would drain resources - and the best pupils - away from public education. In a letter to Senator Robert Dole, the President said the measure would help hundreds of thousands of ethnic minority families who were making "heroic sacrifices" to send their children to private inner-city schools.

Our proposal poses no divisive threat to public education, History has

shown that competition breeds excellence; alternatives to public education tend to strengthen public education," the letter continued.

It quickly became apparent during the Senate debate that the President's pleas had not been persuasive enough. Fiscal conservatives, normally supportive of the Reagan Administration, complained that the proposal would be too costly. And liberals of both parties argued that a system of tax incentives would benefit only the rich and create a dual education system in which publicly funded schools would become second-rate dumping grounds for the poor.

One reason for the proposal's failure is that its supporters tried so hard to placate the fiscal conservatives that they increased the opposition of liberal senators. To reduce the cost to the Treasury, the proposed refund was whittled down to only \$300 (£200) a year per child so that the total cost of the scheme when it became fully operational could be kept to less than \$800m a year.

As a result, many senators expressed doubt that the small tax refunds would enable poor and middle-income families - supposedly the beneficiaries of the scheme - to withdraw their children from the public education

system. Senator David Boren said nobody in Congress could really believe that an extra \$100 or \$200 would enable the average American to send children to schools with fees of several thousand dollars.

Senator Ernest Hollings, a Democratic presidential candidate and a leading opponent of tuition tax credits, claimed the credits would benefit the few at the expense of the many, undermine public confidence in public education, and create an expensive set of new bureaucratic rules. If the Bill Government would by 1985 spend only \$105 for each child in public education compared with \$329 for each child in a private school.

He added: "Adoption of this tuition tax credit plan would, when considered with other parts of the Reagan education policy, switch Federal financial support from one of balanced support for the needs of both public and private school students to a policy of assisting private schools at the expense of the public (government-run) schools."

A Georgia Republican, Senator Mack Mattingly, said the proposal "will create public schools for the poor, handicapped and disadvantaged and private schools for the rest".

Religious and private schools, he added, had already shown themselves unwilling to offer special help to handicapped children or those in need of vocational training.

The strength of sentiment against the proposal in the Senate clearly came as a surprise to the Administration. After the vote, Administration officials conceded that in some respects the introduction of the measure had been badly mismanaged. By leaving a decision on tax credits so late in the President's term, supporters of the proposal had given opposing pressure groups - notably the powerful teachers' unions - plenty of time to warn senators that a vote for the measure would prove costly in the forthcoming elections.

In addition, the debate was badly timed. In its rush to enact legislation before the end of the congressional session, the Administration found itself asking the Senate to support a costly new proposal only days after it had voted against a package of educational reforms approved by the House of Representatives.

Even Senator Strom Thurmond, an ultra-conservative Republican and long a supporter of tuition tax credits, said he could not support the measure at a time when the Federal deficit was so large.

Costs of moving to study

Commonwealth heads of government, due to meet in New Delhi this week, will be far too busy grappling with the hurt pride and disunity engendered by the invasion of Grenada, to spend much time worrying about such day-to-day matters as education.

However, they are due to consider a report proposing modest moves towards improving student mobility within the Commonwealth, the direct result of a call for action in this field at the last heads of government meeting in Melbourne in 1981.

After this meeting, a Commonwealth Standing Conference on Student Mobility was set up to examine the immediate problems and possible long-term strategies.

Its report says that fee levels are crucial, and that countries which set higher fees for non-natives, but which give preferential treatment to some categories of students, should consider including Commonwealth students among the favoured categories.

Two weeks ago, on the eve of his departure for Europe, the economics faculty had been attacked and a faculty worker killed when he fell from a third floor window.

The army had said the building was a terrorist cell and the man who was killed was a terrorist leader who decided to commit suicide by jumping.

But the man was a loyal and long-standing university worker who had no history of political involvement, Senator Parada said. "If he decided to commit suicide it was precisely because he was thinking about what happens to people when they fall into the hands of the army."

Over recent weeks there had been a massive propaganda campaign against the university and its staff.

The university has been struggling to continue operating in rented accommodation since its campus was occupied by the military in 1980. Senator Parada, who is in Europe to raise funds, said there was much support among British academics and students, but that institutional support from universities and colleges was less forthcoming.

At the conference, the National Union of Teachers, which has launched a campaign to build schools in El Salvador, handed over a cheque for £300 as a first donation to the funds. The National Union of Teachers has called on the Trades Union Congress and the World Confederation of Organizations of the Teaching Profession to ensure that all members of the Grenada Union of Teachers are allowed to continue to pursue with their professional and trade union activities.



A 'new tone' through reading materials using local forms of English.

Invasion setback to training

GRENADA

Hilary Wilce on what the end of the revolution has meant to education

Literacy, teacher training and cultural programmes started under the revolutionary government of Grenada have almost certainly ground to a halt following the American invasion.

Two British teachers, who worked for the Grenadian government until their evacuation three weeks ago, told a London conference last week that everyone involved in these programmes supported the revolution, and many would now have been detained, or in some cases killed.

Ms Lisbeth de Block, who had been working with an in-service teacher training programme, said she was particularly worried about the first

350 teachers to have finished training, whose final results were due to go out in the week of the invasion.

"These teachers have worked extremely hard for three years, and now they might well be back where they started, in pay and status at least."

She said she was also worried whether reading materials the programme had developed, which set a new tone by stressing the agricultural base of the island's economy and which made use of local forms of English, would now be used. Infant books were already in the schools, but primary materials were still being printed, away from the island, at the time of the invasion.

Speaking later, she said that most of the staff working in the National In-Service Teacher Education Programme, developed by the radical British teacher Mr Chris Searle, whose name became known in this country in the early 1970s when he was sacked from his East End school for publishing a book of poems by pupils without permission, were non-Grenadians and would have had to leave.

"When we left they were picking up everyone associated with the revolution," she said.

Ms Verena Mostyn, who taught in a boys' secondary school and worked with women's organizations on the island, said she feared that day nurseries and pre-primary schools set up under the Ministry of Women's Affairs would not have the funds or personnel to continue.

The two women were special additional speakers at a conference on education in Central America, organized by the World University Service. The rector of the national university of El Salvador, Senor Miguel Angel

Treading warily in hope of compromise

FRANCE

Anne Corbett looks at government efforts to gain control over the private sector

Still tiptoeing successfully over eggshells, M. Alain Savary, the French Minister of Education, can start the first stage of negotiations to give the Government more control over state-aided private schools.

His challenge is to find a solution that is acceptable both to the private, mostly Catholic, schools which do not want assimilation into the state system, and to Government's supporters who want an answer consistent with the Socialist election commitment to a united and secular system of education.

Last week, in a crucial development, the forum for Catholic education, the Comité National de l'Enseignement Catholique announced that the proposals M. Savary has recently put forward (TES, October 28) are more acceptable as a starting point than the project of last January, and that though they could not agree to the whole package, they would negotiate on some specific points.

This followed a strong denunciation of a "sell out" by the front for secular education, the Comité National d'Action Laïque in which the big teaching unions and the left-wing parents' federation are prominent; and strong criticism of M. Savary himself at the recent Socialist party congress.

In an interview just before the Catholic education committee's decision was announced, M. Bernard Derosier, a well-placed Socialist deputy and leading spokesman on the education and cultural affairs parliamentary committee, confirmed that when the Socialists say they cannot agree to public funds going to church schools, they mean they cannot agree to them going to the schools on present terms.

These terms, he says, represent an extraordinarily favourable deal with no strings attached as to whether the Catholics can set up new schools and classes; and giving them a particularly unfair advantage in areas of declining population.

M. Derosier said that the party as a whole had approved M. Savary's strategy of "convincing rather than constraining". But now it was time to act, and they would continue to put pressure on the minister.

The Catholic statement, asserting the need for a renovation of the education system, would agree that the Catholic schools could not necessarily have all their wishes taken into account when deciding on opening and closing classes locally. The deals could be worked out in the context of the decentralization policy; that Catholic schools should take part in curriculum innovation projects; and that Catholics should by agreement control training for teachers in schools under contract.

However, on no account could the Catholics agree not to have full control over the appointment of head teachers, nor could they accept any restrictions on parental choice.

Unity on both sides is fragile and shifts with circumstances. The Catholic statement is a victory for the moderates led by Canon Paul Guibert. But at the same time a well-known hard-liner, the former chairman of the Catholic Schools' parents' federation, M. Henri Lefebvre, was elected to the council. He made his name in labelling the left's common programme in 1978 the work of "madmen and assassins".

On the other side, the Socialist and Communist parties, while approving M. Savary's strategy, will nevertheless back the CNAL demonstration.

In last week's national assembly discussions on the educational budget, the opposition included M. Michel Debret, architect in 1959 of the present arrangement for state aid for Catholic schools, who said the Savary proposals

were a trap.

SOUTH AFRICA

Hilary Wilce on criticism of the British Council's educational help for South Africans

The British Council angrily denied this week that it supported apartheid by giving educational aid to South Africa. The rebuttal followed recent press claims that pressure was growing for all educational contacts with the country to be boycotted - claims likely to please those in South Africa known to be less than happy with the council's programme, which channels money specifically to young blacks and "open minded" whites.

Mr John Burgh, the director general of the British Council, said its policy towards South Africa was the same as towards anywhere in the world - that is "to promote an enduring understanding and appreciation of Britain" by educational and cultural contact.

But unions representing Council staff say they are worried about the nature of its growing involvement with South Africa and are undertaking a joint review of policy.

And Mr Mike Terry, executive secretary of the Anti-Apartheid Movement, said the Council was "misguided" in working within South Africa, and should use its funds to support scholarships for refugee and liberation group students.

The Council channels about £700,000 a year towards South Africa, to support specialists studying in Britain, to fund short-stay visitors, and to pay for presentations of books.

About £500,000 of this is technical cooperation money from the Overseas Development Administration which is earmarked for development assistance to the black community. A further £200,000 comes from the Council's own funds and, in the words of its official policy document, is directed towards the successor generation of young people who are likely to be influential in South Africa in the future. These are likely to be mainly black, but will also include English-speaking Afrikaners and English-speaking South Africans.

The document says: "The council

Tightrope path to open minds under apartheid



Prickly problem: British Council help for academics from institutions for blacks like the University of Bophuthatswana or this one, the University of the North in the Transvaal, has raised questions about whether it is effectively helping or hindering separate development.

works with the present generation of people in authority insofar as this is consistent with the main emphasis of the work among the successor generation."

This year 47 South Africans will come to Britain on scholarships and short visits, among them black school science and language advisers, and black university staff. Three London-appointed staff are currently based in

homelands, yet a number of staff from the University of Bophuthatswana have come over to Britain on Council money.

The Council defends this by saying these are academics only, and nothing to do with the homeland's administration.

Mr Burgh, who visited South Africa in 1982, told staff on his return that "in South Africa the council walks something of a tightrope". The limitations on its activities by the South African government were "psychological rather than specific, but they called for careful judgment".

Yet he had met no South African, black or white, who believed the Council was propping up apartheid, he said, and none who thought the Council should leave.

However, Mr Terry said the Council would not be allowed to stay if it genuinely opposed apartheid. The nature of the programme was inevitably self-selective.

"People are bound to be looking over their shoulder all the time. They will be going to get a passport to leave, and if not, is it worth offering them anything?" Others within South Africa did not want to come forward and be part of a programme that they felt colluded with apartheid, he said.

The policy also ran counter to the general boycott policy, which included an academic boycott, and which was supported by the National Union of Teachers and other teacher unions, he said.

A member of the Anti-Apartheid Movement's executive, Mr Frank Dobson, MP, has put down a question in Parliament on the Council's activities in South Africa.

Meanwhile three of the five unions representing Council staff are engaged in a joint review of the council's policy towards South Africa, and are expected to complete their report in the new year.

The unions negotiated a "conscience clause" allowing members to ask not to work on the South Africa programme two years ago, and a few staff have taken advantage of this. But worries about involvement in South Africa are said to be growing in line with the slow upward climb of ODA funds being directed towards the country.

Teachers' rights swept away

CANADA

Les McLean on British Columbia's abolition of job and pay security

The government of British Columbia is pressing ahead with special legislation that will abolish tenure and seniority rights for school teachers, reduce their salaries, and allow the provincial cabinet to have direct control over local authority budgets.

Similar measures are being taken with all workers in the public sector after recent elections in which the government was returned with an increased majority. The Premier had promised a programme of "restraint" by the sweeping and radical proposals, now mostly enacted into law.

Marathon sessions of the legislature were marked by acrimonious debate, during which the leader of the opposition was physically ejected from the House and subsequently banned for the rest of the session.

At first the government's Bill simply gave local authorities the right to dismiss teachers "without cause", but subsequent amendments listed a wide and general list of causes. Authorities can lay off teachers if they decide:

- There is "insufficient work";
- There is insufficient money;
- A change is made in organizational structure (whether staff reductions result or not);
- Any "activity or services" are discontinued or reduced.

The only recourse teachers have is to the courts, where compensation or reinstatement may only be claimed on the grounds that the authority exceeded its jurisdiction or erred in law. The existing Compensation, Stabilization Act permitted the cabinet to

limit salary increases. New amendments permit the cabinet to order cuts of any size, and in the budget speech the Ministry of Finance indicated that cuts of up to 5 per cent were contemplated.

In the past few years, independent arbitrators have awarded salary increases under the clause enabling them to arrive at "fair and equitable salaries". Teachers had received some handsome increases as a result of arbitration. One of the several new Bills before the legislature requires arbitrators to give paramount consideration to "ability to pay", while a different Bill permits the Minister of Education to set maximum budgets (and or portions of budgets) and removes local taxation powers, thereby controlling an authority's "ability to pay".

Protests have poured in from across Canada and around the world, with no observable effect. The president of Japan's 600,000-member Teachers Union said in a cable that the tenure provisions were "villainous". "An odious and anti-democratic attack on fundamental human rights and free collective bargaining," said the president of the Centrale de l'Enseignement du Québec. Germany's education and science union declared: "Those measures violate the word and the spirit of recognized international labour conventions. But the British Columbia minister of education said that the normal bargaining process was intact."

On November 1 a series of public sector strikes began shutting down government offices and liquor stores. If no progress is made in negotiations, the teachers will walk out, followed later by ferry boat crews, building up to a general strike by the end of the month. It could be a bleak Christmas, arranged for state aid for Catholic schools, who said the Savary proposals were a trap.

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Dreary picture
maddens minders

Sir - As a social worker with responsibility for the childminding service in a borough not covered by the Mayall and Petrie study (TES November 4), I am appalled by its misleading generalizations.

One of the most relevant statements in Appendix H reads: "Strictly speaking, generalization can be made only to the four boroughs in north London from which we drew our sample." These boroughs are unnamed but at least the south London boroughs are exempted from labelling!

As chairman of the London Childminding Workers Group, I am aware of considerable anger among both childminders and social services workers, who know that the dreary picture presented is not valid in their own areas.

The total sample in the study was 159 minders; we have nearly 400 in our borough alone, of which the overwhelming majority do not show the negative characteristics so heavily emphasized in the study.

Of this small sample, only 66 minders were interviewed, for one hour, apparently to assess a number of varied and complex issues, each of which would be seen by experienced specialist workers as a subject of lengthy and careful discussion. The other 93 minders had interviews lasting only 10 to 20 minutes.

Apparently it was also possible in these minimal contacts for researchers to make reliable observations of the interaction between children and minders. Even allowing for the 64 parallel interviews set up with mothers, this would still be seen as inadequate contact to come to definite conclusions on the registration of one childminder, let alone a valid statement of any general trend.

The headline statement that minders "refuse to take black children" is a crude distortion of our experience, except for a small minority who highlight the more flexible attitudes of the majority. This issue is discussed on registration. Some minders feel some anxiety on such matters as unfamiliar foods and family patterns; in my view they would be irresponsible if they did not. However, many of these issues can be resolved with support and the opportunity, and we have both many successful multicultural minders in a variety of cultural backgrounds.

The picture of the harassed and overworked minder, unable to pay individual attention to children, does not apply where numbers are carefully limited, except in a small minority of "overminding" situations which social services workers have to try to deal with individually. As part of our



Numbers carefully limited

registration process, the relationship of the minder's own family commitments to numbers and ages of children minded, is discussed. We rarely register for more than one child under five initially, and no minder is registered to care for more than three children under five, including her own. Any commitment to part-time minding of school age children is also taken into account.

Our specialist workers are usually involved with placement of children and help to deal with such matters as contracts and setting in the child.

Certainly, children are likely to experience similar housing conditions in the family and minding situations, for obvious practical reasons. This does not need to be crucial, even if space is limited, if the following conditions are fulfilled:

1. Safety factors are carefully dealt with by the worker and the minder.
2. The minder is aware of children's play needs, both as a result of her family experience with young children and training schemes, and takes full advantage of local provision, such as toy libraries and discounts on play equipment.
3. The child is taken out frequently, including use of local drop-ins, open spaces, swimming baths, etc.
4. At an appropriate age, the child commences playgroup or nursery school, as he would with a parent. If these conditions are fulfilled, as they are in many authorities, many people would say that it is better for the child to remain in close touch with the local community rather than to be removed to an alien and institutionalized environment, however perfect physically.

JEAN M BOOTH
Senior Social Worker
Under Fives (Childminding)
London Borough of Waltham Forest

Exam grade use

Sir - I am grateful to Laurie Smith for his attempts to put me right about the way in which the GCE boards apply the present A level grading scheme (TES, November 11). I can assure him that I do understand what the JMB does and I have some knowledge of the practice of the other boards.

What our letters have demonstrated is that it is extremely difficult to summarize complex matters in a few lines in our correspondence columns. Laurie Smith's conclusions about relative standards in AEB, London and JMB English literature examinations at A level, based on his interpretations of the bare statistics of awards in the three boards, demonstrate the point

admirably. I would be very sorry, however, if arguments about the ways in which the boards apply the present system were to divert attention from the JMB's objectives in raising the issue in the first place (on which Laurie Smith and I are obviously in full agreement): first, to make users of A level results aware of the limitations of the present system; second, to stimulate national discussion about the need for reform.

The JMB booklet *Problems of the GCE Advanced level grading scheme* is still available (addressed envelope, 25 x 18 cm, with 16p stamp please).

COLIN VICKERMAN
Secretary to the board
Joint Matriculation Board
Manchester

College future

Sir - Despite repeated statements to the contrary, Biddy Passmore and John O'Leary persist in speculation about the future of Fleetwood Nautical College as a result of the NAB planning exercise for 1984/85. (TES November 11).

The future of Fleetwood Nautical College is a matter for Lancashire County Council, and the authority has no plan to 'close' the 'loss' of

advanced work in nautical studies is a matter of great disappointment and regret, but this represents only about 11 per cent of the work of the college. Advanced courses in marine radio and electronics are to continue, as is a substantial amount of non-advanced work and also short courses for the shipping and offshore industries.

ANDREW COLLIER
Chief Education Officer
Lancashire

Poem pair

Sir - I refer to a review of my book *Essentials of Literary Criticism* (TES, October 21). Allan Rodway claims that on page 33 I have failed to pair Wyatt with his poem, "They flee from me" and Herbert with his poem "The Poet". In fact, page 33 is about T.S. Eliot: Herbert is mentioned tangentially as a poet Eliot admired, and Wyatt's "They flee from me" is related to Eliot by way of conclusion, as one of the four poems discussed in that particular chapter. I fail to see how even the hastiest reading could give grounds for imputing a misattribution on my part, especially when, as Dr Rodway admits, the poems are clearly identified in the preceding pages.

Dr Rodway further claims that on page 30 I have given the last letters of the alphabet in the wrong order. The passage in question is part of a discussion of Hardy's "During Wind and Rain". On the previous page I say that the refrains of this poem interest poignantly: the "rotten roses" in the refrain of stanza three belongs to the garden described in stanza two, and the "white storm-birds" in the refrain of stanza two belong with the pet flow of stanza three. I represent this interesting effect by inverting the alphabetical order of "x" and "y" when I sketch the structure of the poem as AwBy/Cx/Dz. Dr Rodway is at liberty to disagree with this schematization, but he has no right to claim it as a fault of hasty writing.

Lastly, Dr Rodway claims that, when discussing in my first chapter the way in which criticism has progressed, I should have gone on to indicate that the major critics are not thereby outdated. However, a statement to this effect forms part of my conclusion, and I refer Dr Rodway to page 141f. It seems that, in spite of his overall praise of my book, Dr Rodway did not trouble to read it to the end.

PHILIP HOBSBAUM
Department of English Literature
University of Glasgow

Allan Rodway writes: May I briefly take up Dr Hobsbaum's point for, despite his suspicions, I did indeed read his book right through - and without undue haste. 1) On page 33 Herbert is mentioned (and Wyatt is not) a few lines before the title "They flee from me". So that it looks as if a slip has been made. A young reader could well assume that Herbert was being said to have written that poem. 2) I accept Dr Hobsbaum's point that in the middle two stanzas the last lines may be taken to contrast with something not in their own, but in the other stanza - which does justify the switch of x and y. 3) I did, of course, mean that a remark about the continuing value of the major critic might have been made at the time that critical progress was being discussed.

Letters for publication should be kept as brief as possible and typed on one side of the paper only. The Editor reserves the right to cut or amend them.

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Computer cause will suffer
if failings are overlooked

Sir - Like every teaching aid, the microcomputer ("Extra", TES, November 4) can be expected to have its own "honeymoon" period, during which it will be dragged into inappropriate situations - sometimes, indeed, because the instructor desperately needs any *deus ex machina* to save his or her bacon during a double session of 5D on a morning after both instructor and class have been on their respective tides.

Such "equipment honeymoons" seem to me to be entirely desirable: surely the danger of all apparatus - literally "Persian" or otherwise - is that even the best of users' handbooks can substitute for the subtle combination of enterprise and restraint which is the hallmark of the judicious equipment-user, and this judgment is best cultivated by experiment.

If the disadvantages of computers are not thoroughly researched and recognized the whole cause of computers in

education will tend to suffer. There are, for example, many situations in which it would be easier and more effective to provide one book per child rather than one computer keyboard per child - especially since books can be more easily taken home and studied there, too.

More fundamental to the computer education, however, is the necessity for developing a form of "computer ethic". For example, the programs used by children and students ought, essentially, to contain clear "back-track" and "opt-out" options so as to avoid chasing the mind of the user along narrower and irrevocable lines of choice.

There is surely a good case, too, for instructors to place into perspective for the student any rosy sense of achievement deriving from the correct solution of a computer problem. All too often such successes can blind the user into forgetting that his processes of

thought and selection have been upheld and channelled by the - invisible - designers of the program. The students should be made aware that the same problem could be approached in other ways and should be encouraged to compare computerized results with the strengths as well as the weaknesses of his own unaided thought.

Finally, I note that Mr Laurence Pateman, of the University of London, states that GCE logic is to be discontinued by his board (Letters, TES, November 11) partly because examinations have sometimes attracted less than one hundred candidates. Isn't this a dangerous anomaly? - that the schools don't want logic itself, but they still want the computers which are based on logic?

E TURNBULL
38 Elsdon Road
Gosforth
Northumberland

Soft-awareness

Sir - "Software scenarios" (Extra), was very interesting. The point made by Roger Watson, (director of Longman's School Division and chairman of the Educational Publishers' Committee on software) that he would like to see more "classroom generated programs and a situation where teachers have more influence over the development of software" is very valid. Many teachers up and down the country are writing some excellent programs. Unfortunately, these programs are being used only in their own schools or areas.

Britain can lead the world in computer educational software if more teachers publicize their software and form their own software companies. The 1980s is certain to be regarded as the computer age. The potential for improving everyone's education and awareness is limitless.

We as teachers should not be afraid of this new exciting development but should train ourselves to meet our children's exciting thirst for education which new computer software is awakening.

KEN HEATON
Jive Software
Teacher, ILEA
70a The Hill
Wheatthorpe
Hertfordshire

Oxford fallacy

Sir - I was disturbed to see raising its head again what I have always believed to be a fallacy regarding Oxford entry and the public schools (TES, October 29). I refer to the proposition that seventh term entry "advantages" such schools.

I would argue it another way and say that, if anything, the system as it operates at present gives an advantage to maintained schools, in that the introduction of the fourth-term entry system some years ago has made life significantly more difficult for candidates from public schools.

Many such schools still use the fourth-term method little, if at all, believing both in the absolute value of the teaching that they provide in the seventh term and that they are on the fourth ground if they seek to use the fourth term method too vigorously, because they see it as having been introduced primarily to assist candidates from the maintained sector.

The net result is that seventh-term candidates compete for a dramatically smaller number of places than was the case before the introduction of fourth term entry and in border-line cases the advantage tends to go to the fourth term candidates as against the seventh term group that the former still has some "developing" to do.

The abolition of seventh term entry, if it comes to pass, may therefore be to the advantage rather than to the detriment of public school candidates, who will be fighting for places on equal terms once more.

ANDREW MILNE
Chapel Cottage
Thrapston
Northants

Your readers may be interested to know that the Parental Help with Reading in Schools Project begins this term at the University of London Institute of Education, and will carry out just such a study.

The objectives are to:
□ appraise the scale of the practice of



Computer keyboards: less efficient than one might expect.

Klondike doubts

Sir - Peter David's report casting doubt "on the wisdom of the Klondike-like rush to buy computers for schools" (TES, November 11), reminded me of a letter I received from Lord Belstead, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Education in January 1975.

I had asked for information about the number of language laboratories in

full use, in part use or not used at all in our secondary and grammar schools. Your readers will probably recall a similar Klondike-like rush by headmasters and heads of language departments to purchase them.

Lord Belstead's letter said: "It is impossible to say with any approach to accuracy how many language laboratories are in full use... But it is

probably true to say that factors such as over-complexity, obsolescence and doubts about the curricular value of using this equipment contribute... to lack of use."

It would be interesting to know how much of this is applicable to computers in our schools today.

STEPHEN CORRIN
10 Russell Gardens
London NW11

specimen papers. These were recommended for acceptance by the advisory panel in 1982 and again this year. Can we not work to encourage the London board to set on these resolutions?

With Mr May I completely agree that logic is a subject for juniors as well as seniors. I have taught it to first-formers. I also had a great deal of fun in presenting to fourth-formers questions on moral philosophy and metaphysics taken from the above mentioned draft papers. "When shall we be able to take such an examination?" they demanded.

RAYMOND WINCH
41 Essex Street
Oxford.

using parents as reading helpers in the classroom;
□ examine the significance of the practice for teachers and parents; and
□ describe in detail a number of different existing within-school schemes for involving parents in the teaching of reading.

Of particular interest are the implications of schools' use of parent reading helpers for (1) home-school relations, especially in communities with high proportions of children from ethnic minority families; (2) teachers' professionalism and expertise in the teaching of reading; and (3) teachers' working conditions.

The project would welcome contact with teachers and parents who are either involved in schemes of this kind, or who could contribute to the research from any other perspective.

BARRY STIERER
Research officer
Parental Help with Reading in Schools Project
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Micro-sauce

Sir - In "Minds for the Future" in the *Computers in Education* "Extra", Tony Clements shows a welcome concern at the small numbers of girls applying to program Five Ways Software. He fears that this is part of a general trend; Rosemary Fraser, Anita Straker and Heather Govier *et al* notwithstanding.

Logically, he says, he "can see only four possible reasons". Only four? "The fourth logical possibility is that, despite the great female outcry for equality of job opportunities, girls don't actually want real equality but are content to remain in a subordinate role".

Is it logical to deduce that failure to enter the field of software programming will put/keep females in a subordinate role? Society is not a static structure of superior v. subordinate, it is a two-way movement of shifts, balances and accommodations. A software programmer will be subordinated to consumer demand, educational theorists and publisher from time to time. Did scribes dominate illiterate kings?

Despite his emotive diction, the challenge is good-humoured. Tony Clements is no misogynist. He is hurt and bewildered that they haven't taken

Telling difference

Sir - John Huffell (TES, October 28) proposes the development of school courses which train children in keyboard skills. The conventional keyboard is, however, a particularly inefficient way of entering most types of information to a computer. There are many ideas for alternative methods available.

Wouldn't the time of IBM executives, as well as computer educationists, be better spent fostering the development of hardware and software which will make it easier for the untrained operator to communicate with information-handling devices?

S E KENNWELL
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Bromsgrove, Worcs

Further, that "Midland comprehensive" may be maligned; for a brief report does not reveal whether the attitudes claimed by pupils are corroborated by choices and results. Post-pubertal pupils of either sex will assert negative opinions on principle; girls on the whole, slandering the staff more fluently and imaginatively than boys.

What weighting was given to the self-respecting teenager's unwillingness to admit to liking any lesson?

In a comprehensive with a positive attitude to work and fine science teaching, the 1983 options show that, with free choice, only 2 of 139 girls chose no science; 60 took one, mainly biology; 52 took two and 25 took all three. In their fifth year, many will also attend voluntary human biology classes in their lunch-hour.

Certainly our girls tend more to the science of living things - boys veering more to the inanimate - but plainly they do not "increasingly dislike science after puberty". Perhaps, elsewhere, other cultural or educational factors impose dislike; it is manifestly not the inevitable result of growing up.

PHILIP OAKESHOTT
Head
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Chandler's Ford, Hampshire

Physics growth

Sir - We wonder whether it is necessary for Ellis Guildford School to segregate the sexes to increase the proportion of girls opting for physical science (TES September 23). Here at Fowey School, our keen, practical and unbiased chemists expect half the girls to opt for chemistry. Now that the physics area is being rejuvenated, considerable growth is taking place there. Only for boys does this occur at biology's expense.

The head of science, careers teacher and deputy head work together, through our options booklet, parents' meetings and interviews, to stress the importance of physical science to boys and girls alike. The Nottingham researchers may find the quality of teaching and advice matter most.

A NICHOLLS
Head of science
R TANNER
Deputy head
Fowey School
Windmill
Fowey

D E AGER
Chairman
Aston Modern Languages Club
University of Aston in Birmingham

Letters for publication should be kept as brief as possible and typed on one side of the paper only. The Editor reserves the right to cut or amend them.

TALKBACK

Conditions of service

DAVID OSBOURNE

At one time teachers would do almost anything in the line of duty. Time and menialness held no limits, but that was when esteem, morale, and dedication were generally much higher than they are at present. As these three have been eroded, so has the good will.

When teachers' employers refer to contract they appear to be seeking a way in which some elements that used to be accepted as part of a teacher's life can again become an expectation, rather than a forlorn hope; lunchtime duty, after-school meetings, parents' activities, and in-service training.

The issue which is totally avoided is time. Management is sure to avoid it since most of its members realize how much they are getting for their money. Teachers' unions are sure to avoid it because they think it will immediately mean loss of control of time outside the limited contract day—which many of their members will want safeguarded at any cost.

Would it be so disastrous? At the moment there are too many anomalies and it is only in the interest of the unconscious teacher not to have them ironed out. Some schools have a majority of highly committed teachers.



working themselves to a standstill. Others have few. Some have staff supporting the head in overseeing student horde at lunchtime. Others have none. For the teacher who does little outside the class-contract period, there can be little joy in talk of contract. All the others – and they form the great majority – might well afford it a closer look.

What, for example, forms a reasonable annual working period? A well qualified person in commerce or industry at the level of middle management or below could expect to work near an equivalent of 43 weeks in the year with

about 45 hours a week. This gives an annual expectation for their salary of somewhere near 1,935 hours a year. A teacher works an equivalent of 38 contract weeks. In his experience any teacher worth his or her salt will work at least 60 hours a week.

In addition, a modest estimate of work done within "holiday" periods would be 120 hours, giving a total of 2,400 hours.

If one accepts these sums as reasonable in very general terms, it would suggest that a conscientious teacher works the equivalent of nearly eight weeks more per year than the sort of counterpart chosen for comparison.

Unfortunately too much of the out-of-school work is sight unseen, done in solitary splendour on the dining room table. Cuts in resources, fewer textbooks, and less opportunity to buy materials, increase such time rather than reduce it. The do-it-yourself nature of personal development also leans heavily on personal hours and expense. The thousands of teachers, for example, who are trying to teach themselves the elements of computer operation to be able to understand it and employ it in their classrooms, can do so only in their own late night or weekend hours. A major change in syllabus in many subjects can run away with a large part of a summer "vacation".

Teachers, however, do not help their own case. As workers they are not particularly good at working cooperatively. Too many consider that the time to leave their place of work is

when the children depart. The bulging bags of marking and preparation go with them, and few appreciate the full benefits of truly working in a team.

Any agreed contract should be based, not on responsibilities, but on the time needed, to fulfil all the necessary work. The first and foremost of these has to be class contact. If we assume that the preparation and follow-up to a lesson should be at least equal to the length of that lesson, a calculation begins to emerge.

After making a deduction from the total number of working hours for duties, professional development and up-dating, meetings, writing reports, concerts, plays, and out-of-school courses, what remains is then divided by two to show the available number of teaching periods.

The problem of distributing duties and teaching periods between the varying groups of teachers in their varied age and subject sectors will probably mean that both sides will let the idea of such a contract drop like a hot brick. With it will fall any real opportunity to clarify the responsibilities and gain more equitable working hours across the year.

I doubt if even a partial agreement is possible on, say, lunchtime duties.

Any change involving a contract will need to be more than an agreement over some small part, however knotty. And any sensible basis needs to bring about a reduction of the total working hours of good teachers.

David Osbourne is head of Hobart High School, Loddon, Norfolk.

Too much maths

MICHAEL CORNELIUS

What were you doing 15 months ago? Imagine that those past 15 months have been spent doing nothing but learning mathematics – eight hours every day, five days a week – and you have some idea of the amount of time a typical child spends in mathematics lessons in primary and secondary schools up to the age of 16. Is it worth it? Do most of us need such a massive dose of mathematics? To judge from the reactions of most of the adult population we are wasting a awful lot of pupils' and teachers' time.

An inquiry into the use of mathematics by adults in daily life by the Advisory Council for Adult and Continuing Education concluded: "Many people... were inhibited about using mathematics. The mathematical needs of adults in daily life cannot be easily defined."

Her Majesty's Inspectorate has said "... at the extreme utilitarian end of the range of reasons for teaching mathematics, each person needs to know enough arithmetic to make simple purchases, count change, check wages and understand a popular newspaper."

The Cockcroft report concluded: "... there is hardly any piece of mathematics which everyone uses... we would include among the mathematical needs of adult life the ability to read numbers and to count, to tell the time, to pay for purchases and to give change, to weigh and to measure, to understand straightforward timetables and simple graphs and charts."

Do we need the equivalent of 15 months non-stop mathematics for every child to achieve such modest skills? Indeed, the Cockcroft report goes on to produce a foundation list which "should form part of the mathematics syllabus for all pupils (and)... should constitute by far the great part of the syllabus... those pupils in about the lowest 40 per cent of the range of attainment."

Many pupils leave primary school able to cope with most of this foundation list and yet still face five years of daily maths lessons.

Some children will need to know a lot of mathematics, just as some will need to know a lot of French or history, but not all pupils. Has the time not come for a long hard look at the mathematics taught in school, particularly secondary school? Are we not wasting pupils' and teachers' time?

The problem of mathematics teacher shortage could be solved, and those hours of boring mathematics curtailed, if we reduced secondary school mathematics to a one-period-a-week subject instead of a five-period one as long as extra lessons were provided for pupils who were really going to need and use mathematics. For those unsure of future needs, a single lesson a week would keep their mathematics "ticking over" and a more intensive diet could be produced when required. For pupils hooked on mathematics at an early stage, live (or even more) lessons a week would pose no problem and doubtless some of these students would become future professional mathematicians.

Most children leave primary school at the age of 11 already knowing enough mathematics to satisfy the needs of everyday life. It is sometimes said to see a pupil at the age of 16 who appears to know less mathematics than he/she knew at 11 and who approaches the subject with increased trepidation. By trying to teach too much mathematics our secondary schools are shattering the mathematical confidence of the adult fear of things mathematical.

While the actual abolition of secondary mathematics for some pupils might be an extreme step to take, there does seem to be a strong case for a severe diminution in the amount of time spent on the subject. Are there not better things to do with pupils' time spend hour after hour on work which is meaningless, abstract and divorced from real life? Should not the position of secondary mathematics as an automatic "five period a week" subject be challenged?

Michael Cornelius is senior lecturer in education at the University of Durham School of Education.

Noises off

MARGARET McALPINE

As an English teacher, I fully appreciate the importance of school visits to the theatre. As a theatre-going member of the public, I am beginning to dread them. It is time, I feel, to draw up a basic code of practice for those participating in school trips, so that other members of the audience are able to view the performance, undisturbed.

Last week I attended a modern dance performance at my local theatre. Behind me were two complete rows of girls of about 11 or 12 years. They were bored and restless. The crackle of sweet papers never stopped and a large proportion of the girls talked without a break. I could under-

stand their boredom. The local television station had shown an extract from the repertoire, suggesting the programme was aimed at a much younger age group than was in fact the case.

My resentment springs from the fact that there was no member of staff sitting among the girls to make sure that they did not distract the attention of other members of the audience. Had teachers been within earshot, they could not have failed to notice that all was not well.

Over and over again performances to theatres are marred for innocent members of the public by school groups organized by teachers who then wash their hands of the whole affair, remove themselves to a distant corner of the theatre and only acknowledge the existence of their party on the coach returning home.

Welcome as block bookings are to theatres, wouldn't it be possible for box offices to lay down a minimum ratio of adults to pupils? Shouldn't these adults then see to their responsibility to ensure that they sit among



their party, placed in such positions that knots of inattention and noise do not develop to any great extent? Also wouldn't it be too repulsive to say "no sweets during the performance"?

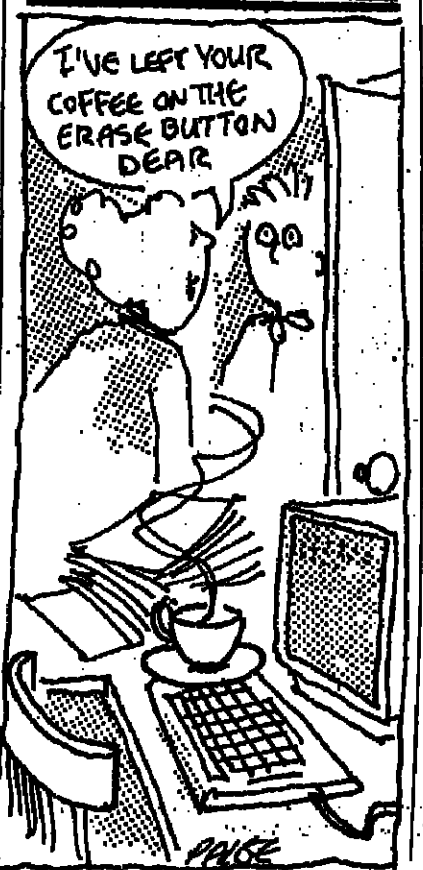
I organize school theatre trips, I know their importance, I think they should continue and increase in number. If they are to do so they must be

well-organized and properly supervised, because as a theatre-goer, who pays a high price for tickets, I demand the right to watch a performance, in peace, undisturbed by noises off.

Margaret McAlpine teaches at St Benedict's RC Upper School, Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk.

Computer admin

BRIAN MAYLIN



I write to indicate what can be achieved in the field of computer-based educational administration in a perfectly normal and ordinary comprehensive school with limited equipment. While we have hardware and software which we use to teach computer studies as an examination subject, the only equipment that is used for school administration purposes in a Tandy TRS-80 48K Model III twin disc computer and a Tandy daisywheel model II printer. With this alone, a hard-working, self-taught, computer "expert" (the head of science here) has delighted us all by successfully devising ways and means of undertaking a great deal of school administration more rapidly and efficiently by using computer programs.

The first, and undoubtedly the most successful of these is that which sorts out the free option choices made by the pupils at the end of the third year. Some 220 pupils choose and five subjects from a list of 22-23 for future study and, after they have been vetted, these 1,100 choices have to be slotted into five teaching blocks to the satisfaction of both staff and pupils. Hitherto the process has taken 50-60 hours of concentrated hard work. This year it took about two hours to feed in the information and one hour to produce the finished product, which itself could be further refined if necessary. The total process took only five to six hours, and was 100 per cent accurate.

From the same suite of programs we were also able to obtain all those lists that are so essential in any school but which take so long to compile. These included year lists showing every child in alphabetical order together with form and all the subjects studied (and the teachers in each subject) form lists containing basically the same information but in forms; and

subject lists and attendance and mark registers, showing each child studying a particular subject in each "option" column. All these are invaluable not only in forms four and five, but also where choices are made in languages and crafts in forms two and three, and in the sixth form.

Finally, we are able to provide individual timetables to every child, showing the subject, teacher and room for each period of the week.

The second broad area where we have gained is by turning our computer and printer into a data storage and retrieval system and into a word processor. This enables us to store information on disc and reissue it as required with whatever modifications are needed. This is particularly useful for all the varied handbooks and brochures issued to junior schools, parents, staff and pupils at the various stages of their schooling.

Once the information has been recorded it is easily retrieved, can be displayed on screen, modified without much difficulty and then printed on a stencil for duplication. Even head-teacher references can be stored in this fashion.

So much we already do. Now we are investigating an extension of the pupil data base to incorporate assessments; and the establishment of a system of administration for external examination entries. This latter will produce details lists for every pupil, showing subjects and levels entered, individual timetables with alternative arrangements where clashes occur, and the eventual results. In addition there will be subject entry lists for staff and the results by department in the format now required for publication with whatever analysis is needed for internal uses.

We also have plans to produce a fair and equitable system and rota for staff cover of absence colleagues; and a financial spread-sheet of school and departmental spending and commitments in respect of our capitation allowance. In time we might even look at the timetable itself.

Meanwhile, we have also taken steps to overcome an administrative problem and a potential danger. First, we have had to review carefully our procedures to ensure that our "expert" is given notice of any changes in basic school information so that he can regularly up-date our computer-based print-outs.

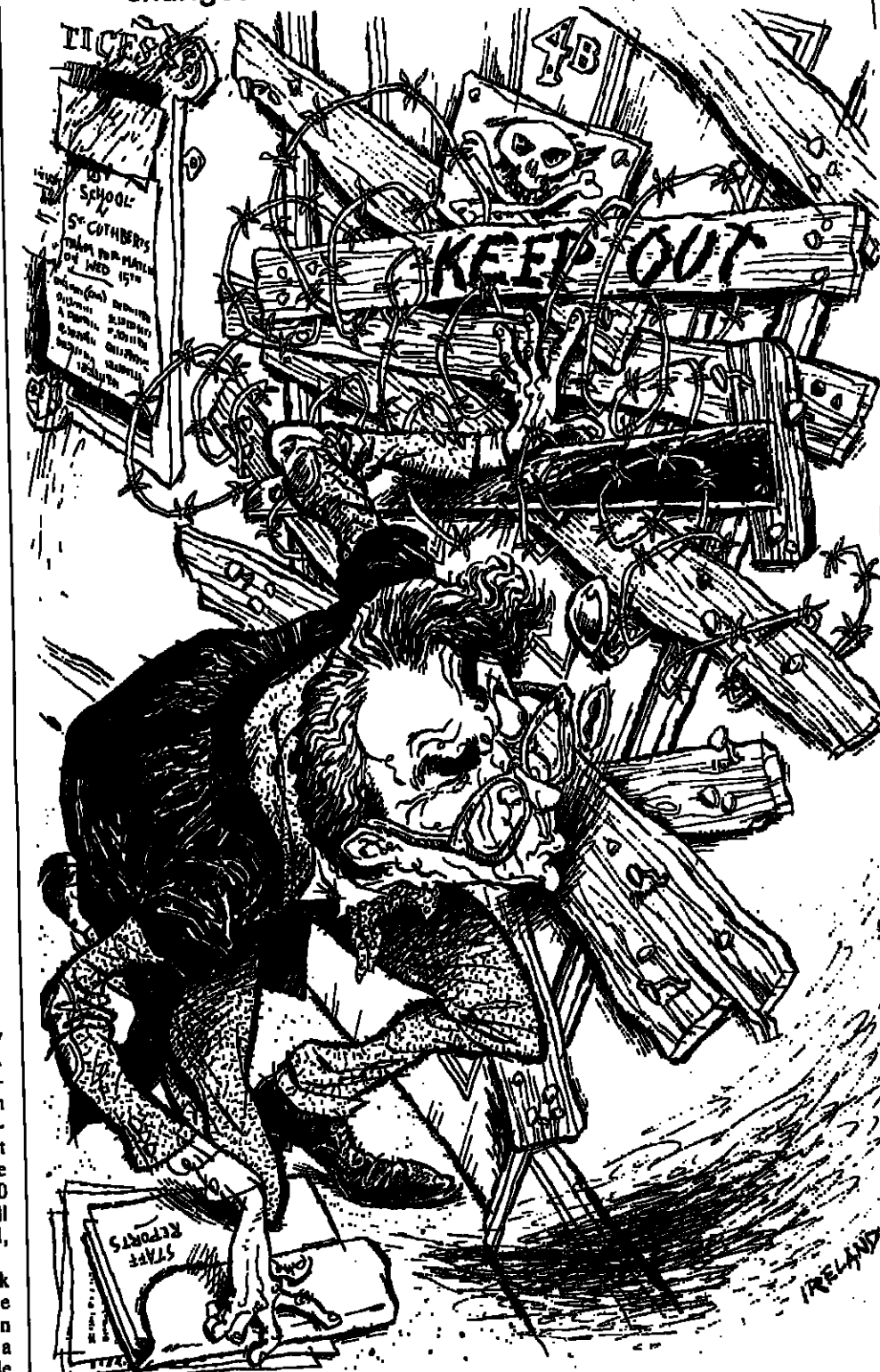
Second, we have taken steps to ensure that his expertise is being passed on so that we are not left stranded if he were to move or fall ill. Thus, with his help and that of our local computer centre, we have initiated a training programme for some senior staff here, myself included, together with the head and other senior staff in a neighbouring school. In this way we can consolidate in Llanrhydydd and help elsewhere.

Brian Maylin is head of Llanrhydydd High School, Cardiff.

FEATURES

Managing to learn

David Trethowan questions the relevance of management training for head teachers without radical changes to traditional attitudes in education



There has been a long tradition among teachers that it is unprofessional to be watched in action with a class...

unlimited contracts, regardless of their results.

In many schools, not only is it generally considered unprofessional to make an official comment adversely against a colleague's performance, but the lack of anything resembling an effective job description makes it almost impossible to establish when a teacher is or is not performing effectively. Heads of comprehensive schools are normally appointed at about age 40 and expected to retire at about 60. Only a small percentage of them change schools in that period, remaining in post for almost 20 years.

There is no effective line-management. Ask any teacher to whom he is accountable, and he will find it almost impossible to answer in line-management terms. His answer will be a confused mélange of colleagues which include head of department, head of year, deputy head, senior teachers, and the like. He is unlikely to be responsible to any of them for his total performance.

Staff do not expect to have their work examined to be observed while working, or to have targets set. There has been a long tradition among teachers that it is unprofessional to expect to be watched in action with a class, to submit a regular record of what is being taught or to be set a target in terms of expected examination results or any other aspect of performance.

The senior manager is not directly accountable to anyone. Heads are responsible for some part of their performance to their employers, the local authority, usually through the roving band of over-worked local education advisers. An adviser's pedigree is usually that of a former middle manager in school. Very seldom are they recruited from the high echelons of school management; it is even less likely that they are able to discuss and set performance criteria and standards for headteachers or their schools. Except in cases of extreme mismanagement, neither government, PTAs or I.E.s. would wish to claim the accountability of the head.

The "business" has no clear aim of what it is trying to achieve. In the absence of a profit motive which provides the main objective for most businesses, schools have substituted "wobbler

in any effective fashion.

Heads should surely be given a job description, be answerable to a clearly indicated manager, using undisputed criteria for assessment and accepted performance standards supported by annual reviews. Any head who failed to achieve the agreed performance standards should be asked to account for his failures and the fault or lack of achievement should be clearly and fairly traced. A failure to achieve a target might be due to poor performance on the part of the head himself or of his staff. But it could also be due to lack, on the part of the local authority, of provision of resources or adequate staffing. It could also be that too optimistic a target had been set and it might be necessary for the schools' catchment area to adjust itself to lower educational expectations. But at least this would be a clear choice and not the accidental result of failing to appraise, take stock and make decisions elsewhere.

Whatever the cause of a declining school or headteacher's performance, such an appraisal system would encourage the identification of the problem and its early remedy. At present there is little that parents or staff or pupils can do to remedy the underachieving school. We work in a situation of crisis management and only the schools which are clearly disaster areas receive remedial attention.

The fourth obstacle to effective management training and development is the vagueness of school aims. If we knew where we were going, we would employ better management techniques to get there. The direction in which our schools proceed is all too often the result of casual and ephemeral pressures. Pressures from industry, from parents, from staff, from universities and colleges, from the inspectorate and from a plethora of organizations and societies whose aim is to influence school organization and administration for minority interests. The greatest safeguard at the moment against undue pressure from any of these sources is the balancing role of the head as he attempts to reconcile the various pressures on the school he leads.

The last and most dangerous shibboleth is the tradition that heads have nothing in common with those who manage other organizations. On the one hand we have the belief that "We have always

We work in a situation of crisis management... only schools which are clearly disaster areas receive attention

muddled through", or "We have our own peculiar ways of managing", and on the other hand the view that schools are the bastions of democracy and that too much accountability could open the way to autocratic control of education from "the centre". There is little feeling that the schools belong to the community, both the nation at large and the immediate locality, nor that a good school could probably be defined in terms of a school which has successfully detected the needs of its community and is meeting them. There are fears of a totalitarian dictator controlling the masses through our education system and little realization that setting criteria for schools does not mean setting the same criteria for all schools, but allowing each to set its targets to meet both national and its local needs.

The publication of DES Circular 3/83 earlier this year was the first recognizable attempt to offer a national system of management training to those teachers who manage our schools in England. The scheme offers the prospect of 20 days annual training to some heads and senior staff and of a "one term training opportunity" in the techniques of management training to a very small number of others. I make the plea that this scheme does not become an academic, lecture based exercise.

We need further research and development to produce a new body of knowledge. A great deal can be learnt from industry as well as from good practice currently used in schools. But we can be making a big mistake to think we can transfer management techniques *en bloc* from industry and commerce or that industrial management courses should be a primary source of training.

On the job training of the personnel in our top companies is supported by management training units staffed by experienced managers. The management training units now setting out to train a new generation of headteachers similarly need to include experienced headteachers.

David Trethowan is head of Warden Park comprehensive school, Haywards Heath, West Sussex and spent last term on secondment devising and leading one of the first one term training courses for head teachers mentioned above.

THE LORD'S BUSINESS

Charles Oxley's Christian Schools Ltd lay down strict rules for pupils and stricter ones for staff – and yet parents and teachers are queuing for places. Bert Lodge meets the headmaster who, besides blowing the whistle on the Paedophile Information Exchange, is in the forefront of the campaigns to bring back hanging, to keep caning and to clean up TV.



Once there was Right and Wrong, black and white, Honour and Shame and every step in this mortal life led Hell or Heavenwards.

Then religious faith slackened and society's moral confidence faltered. The Established Church – tossed as usual on every wind of doctrine – helpfully muddled the waters further by giving an approving nod in the direction of "situation ethics," – that is, sin might not be sin after all depending on when and where and who with. As Auden drily remarked, "Cocaine and concubinage this year, cocaine and chastity next."

On a cliff high above this sargasso of moral relativism stands Charles Alexander Oxley, principal of three Christian schools, founder and chairman of the National Campaign for Law and Order, vice-chairman of the National Association of Viewers and Listeners, father of four, member of the Brethren Sect and better known lately as the Liverpool headmaster who infiltrated the executive of the Paedophile Information Exchange then turned them over to Scotland Yard.

At the rendezvous, Runcorn station, he fits into the crowd. This is where the executives of ICI alight from the London train to be met by the firm's limousines. Surely one of those grey-livered chauffeurs must be waiting for the six foot four inches of dark blue pin-stripe over a white shirt with breast pocket handkerchief to match? But after the last Rover has glided away, he is still there and it seems the moment for a tentative approach.

Ten minutes away is Tower College, the first school he founded 35 years ago in one of those gothic mansions nineteenth century manufacturers had built on the green edges of northern industrial towns. He had spent six war years in the Merchant Navy followed by a brief spell as housemaster at a British public school in Alexandria. The Oxleys (he had married not long before, his wife is also a member of the Brethren sect) got the house and several acres of grounds for £3,600. The 400 now on roll, boys and girls, are all day pupils. Once the school was going he was able to turn to his own education and got an MA at Liverpool University, specializing in Old Testament language.

But why did he eschew the state system he had grown up in? "The 1944 Act had been passed and it meant children from the elementary school had to take the 11-plus." The voice is unexpectedly gentle coming from such a height. A quiet teacher, a quiet class. "I hadn't much faith in that exam because of the IQ test. I believed that a large number of children who had the ability to profit from a good grammar school education would now be denied that opportunity. I also accepted younger children because self-expression was becoming the slogan and I don't like that."

The school rules certainly testify to that. But they also suggest that as far back as the 1940s Charles Oxley knew what sort of school he wanted and only in his own shop could he be sure of achieving it. He has a board of governors now for Christian Schools (North West) Ltd, the non-profit making educational charity which runs the three establishments, but he admits with a grin that one of the conditions of appointment of governors is that they keep out of anything to do with the running of the schools.

Scarbrick Hall, four miles from Southport and another magnificent gothic pile, was acquired in 1963 after it had been abandoned by the Church of England as a teacher training college. Among the 700 pupils are 65 boarders. Last year, when Hamilton college of education closed part of it was snapped up. The bargain price paid for the college caused the Commons Public Accounts Committee some consternation last week (see page 10). A chummy eye kept on the concertina effect of the state teacher training plant has paid off for the Oxleys. Already 300 pupils are enrolled at Hamilton and a further 600 planned.

Oxley readily admits he would open schools like Billy Butlin opened camps if he could. And like Sir William, he has business flair. "I come from a business family. So does my wife. It helps if you're trying to do what we are doing."

Reminded by his Lord that he is not to serve Mammon, he obediently doesn't. He makes Mammon serve him. Every morning no fewer than 20 coaches are touring the lanes of Lancashire and now Lancashire picking up pupils. Pares, like fees, are kept down by keeping class sizes up on the Boys' Brigade principle that a good teacher can teach 30 as easily as 20.

At the front of the prospectus of each of his

schools is an identical paragraph: "Special emphasis is laid on the spiritual and moral aspects of the education provided, which is to help the pupils to acquire a reverence for the Bible, a faith in God, a belief in Jesus Christ as Saviour and a willingness to obey the teaching of our Lord." And lower down, "Great importance is attached to pupils' attitude and behaviour."

My word, it is. A "Pupils' Guide" is put into the hands of every new arrival. It is, in effect, a rule book. All the minutiae of the routine and the unexpected which make up a school day are catered for, the appropriate conduct codified, moral ambiguity dispensed.

The clue to this ordering of priorities is in another paragraph. "This is a Christian school. This does not mean that the school is attached to any particular denomination, nor does it mean we spend a lot of time in the school chapel but it does mean that we have set a high standard of behaviour for ourselves."

In other words, for Charles Oxley there can be no such animal as a homework-dodging, card-playing comic-swapping, truncheon-knocking, gum-chewing, foul – even loud – mouthed, unbuttoned, unbuttoned Christian child.

Not that any of those lapses would earn a corporal punishment. That is reserved for insolence to staff (particularly domestic staff), bullying and persistent disobedience. But precisely because the boundaries of permissible behaviour are so well defined the swish of a cane is heard barely once a year. And parents are warned (yes, they too have a rule book) that any pupil whose conduct merits it will be expelled.

But it is the staff handbook which has most pages. Smokers, pub-frequenters, bomber-jacketed informants ("Just call me Dave, lads"), knickerbockered ladies need not apply. Morning assembly is a parade and the staff prayer meeting an opportunity for further worship.

Both parents and teachers queue for places at Oxley schools. Oxley has no illusions about why he is able to turn away as many pupils as he takes. "Only about 10 to 20 per cent of parents choose the school for its Christian character. Most come because we get good exam results and we insist on good behaviour."

While the explicit Christian commitment of the schools must be an attraction to the believing teacher just as many more must find the strictly ordered environment a haven after years of trying to interpret the state School's response to the world-wide revolt against authoritarianism. He did not even advertise for staff at Hamilton and got 300 applications once the news of his coming got out.

Oxley also finds he is getting more applications from teachers who see their subjects disappearing under multi-disciplinary approaches or simply because they are modern or classical linguists.

To what extent his schools are a spiritual success he will never fully know, but their commercial soundness can be judged by his capacity to employ one secretary full time on what he calls his "non-school activities."

This is the territory of Charles Oxley the campaigner, members of the Church Militant who takes the word to mean what it says. Round the walls of this office files and boxes labelled Michael Foot or Mugging fight for space with the Festival of Light, the Christian Affirmation Campaign, the Responsible Society, Victims of Violence.

"I am trying to re-establish Christian values in society. The morals of the nation are being undermined by atheistic humanism. The Church has simply retreated before it. Law now is based on the nineteenth century philosophy of Bentham and John Stuart Mill that nobody has the right to legislate against anything which can't be seen to be positively harmful. There's no such thing as sin anymore."

Dismissed at the drift has led Charles Oxley to campaign against sex shops, X films, STOPP ("They were using emotive language and bogus statistics. They're doing a terrible disservice to children.") and to campaign for the return of capital punishment. He also started Victims of Violence, a support movement for people assaulted and for relatives of murder victims.

Denouncing the Paedophile Information Exchange in a local newspaper brought a letter from one of the founders, Mr Tom O'Carroll. It was the start of a trail which led to the exposure and discrediting of the organization. Oxley is reluctant to say exactly how he operated but he does emphasize, "I deceived them. But I never told them a lie." So, with honour still bright and egotism unblotted this standard bearer for Christ soldiers on.

Good behaviour

Teachers need a more positive approach to the way pupils behave
Kevin Wheldall and Frank Merrett argue

teacher if they knew why she was sometimes cross with them. Reasons such as "for chewing my ruler" and "for losing my book" were given, but neither child mentioned being out of seat. When the teacher showed them her record sheets they were amazed at how often they were out of their seat. She then told them that she would continue to watch them and that if their "out of seat" scores dropped they would gain a team point. This system continued from day to day with occasional reminders from the teacher. She also showed them charts of their progress and praised and encouraged them whenever their scores fell.

The charts showed clearly that being out of seat declined rapidly for both children in the first week and continued at a very low rate (three to four occasions per day) in subsequent weeks. This intervention was very easy to set up, cost nothing and was very effective.

Another study, was carried out by a young teacher working with a group of 11-year-olds. She had just completed her probationary year quite successfully but was not at all happy about her ability to get the best out of her class of rather below-average children. She decided to "play a game" with them. A cassette tape was prepared which emitted an audible signal every minute on average but at intervals varying between 15 and 95 seconds. The children were given three rules to keep while the "game" was in progress:

- we stay in our seats while working;
- we get on quietly with our work; and

● we try not to interrupt. While the "game" was being played the tape recorder would be switched on and every time the signal was heard the teacher would look at one of the tables, at random. If every child at that table was keeping the rules then each would score a house point. Each time team points were given it was announced publicly and the children were praised.

The results were immediate and remarkable. On-task behaviour rose from 44 per cent to 77 per cent while the "game" was being played. General movement about the room, loud talking and general disorderliness almost disappeared while the amount of written work achieved increased greatly. For example, samples of written work taken from the class before the "game" showed a mean output of five written words per minute. During one of the first "game" sessions this rose to a mean of approximately 13 written words and despite this big increase in output the number of spelling and other errors had hardly changed.

The teacher found the strategy effective and easy to operate. The reactions of the children were positive, several commenting on the fact that the generally improved working atmosphere enabled them to get on with their work without interruption. The big problem with this type of intervention is to transfer these improved responses to other lessons when the "game" is not being played. This calls for the skilful use of praise and encouragement when the game is in operation.

Watch her with visiting special unit kids or driving a traffic-shy pony round Marble Arch in the rush hour and you believe it. "But inner-city schools are something else again."

"It's the total degradation of not being treated like a human being. First year children you have to lock the door on them to keep them in the classroom—who'd laugh and say 'poetry—shit' and 'What's the point of working. I'm not going to get a job anyway'."

"Perhaps the worst thing was that the only work that they would accept, could do, enjoyed, was absolutely repetitive, sterile exercise sheets. Anything creative was a disaster."

"It was so bad that some classes, good pupils with a prospect of O levels, had had five teachers by the March. They'd look at me and say to each other 'Wonder how long this one will last?' It was a challenge but in the end I felt that if I stayed I would become hardened...inhuman."

Then the City Farm job was advertised in the *Evening Standard*. Dierdre applied, breathed scorn on any suggestion that she might not be able to cope, and was appointed Assistant Manager, i/c Education and Filling. "The title," she explains wryly looking at her spattered clothing, "was in case anybody should expect me to do dirty jobs like mucking out."

Now three years later and a full-blown manager, she has a free-wheeling stock of farm animals and cuddly mammals, a posse of local residents who fund-raise, organize the horticultural side and their own classes, and excellent relations with the neighbourhood schools.

The undertaking is helped along by a few local authority grants and the leavings of every friendly shop, restaurant and coster's barrow in the manor. The farm is blooming. So are the Cohen/Moorens.

Was it difficult to adapt to the new life I wondered? What are the disadvantages of changing career mid-stream?

"I haven't lost out too much by the change," says Kevin. "When I left teaching I reckoned it would take two or three years to get back to where I was on the salary scale and it has. I'm older than average in the department—it doesn't seem to matter."

"In industry, as in teaching, you need to be extremely sensitive to the other person's position. Very few people in management are comfortable with maths—so you have to be able to put over the broad picture, showing the pattern, relationships and movement of figures without being intimidating or making it apparent that they have a problem."

"You must be able to take people with you in a discussion and if that involves changing the way they do things, you have to be very persuasive."

"There are stresses in knowing that your work can actually alter the way the organization functions for better or worse. But then that is also one of the most satisfying aspects of the whole thing."

The specialization of industry means that Kevin can concentrate on the "real work" of his department. Precise job specifications mean that everyone knows exactly what is required of him.

Like ducks to water

Two successful teachers frustrated by the school system tell Susan Thomas how they found satisfaction in quite different careers



I found Dierdre, stripy red bottom up, tawny, tousled head down, turtling up a farrowing pen for Muriel the pig's imminent labour. "With you in a minute," she said, wiping a rosy face with cement-tipped fingers. "Could you start with Kevin, he's the respectable one talking to the grey pony."

Kevin, a sober young chap with truly rural sideburns, was not so much talking to the beast as washing his mouth out. Bad language is not tolerated from anyone. City Farm or no City Farm, social disadvantage is no excuse for low standards even in a wall-eyed, loose-tongued nag.

Dierdre Moore, a right bobby-dazzler, even at her tawniest, read theology, taught English and now manages the Lambeth City Farm, under the sooty arches at Vauxhall. Kevin Cohen, her husband, read maths, taught maths, became a project leader in operations research and helps out with the stock most weekends.

They have always done everything together. They went to the same grammar school—though they didn't know it at the time—did their PGCEs together at Winchester and found probationary posts in adjoining schools. The present arrangement is the best so far.

Three years ago, blending a passion for horses and the countryside with teaching careers, they lived and taught in Shropshire. They had a tumble-down farmhouse, 1,200 feet up on the Welsh borders. "Five acres...incredibly friendly neighbours...and Offa's dyke just a short canter away". It sounds idyllic but it wasn't.

"We commuted 80 miles daily, spent most of our money on petrol and horses, left home in the dark and came back in the dark for great chunks of the year, and were so exhausted by the end of every winter that we were physically ill."

Unable to face 20 years or more at the chalk face, they looked for alternatives. By and large, the system and not the principle had alienated them.

At head of sixth form, my career outlook was equally head and head...more attention to administrative detail, time tabling, dinner duties...less

opportunity to think about the syllabus, ways of teaching it or giving individual attention...It was all profoundly discouraging," says Kevin. "Even worse was the knowledge that however hard I tried, I'd never be able to change things."

"Paradoxically it was my attempts to open up the outside world for my pupils which caused my own departure." The increasing contact with industry showed him that in operational research, unlike teaching, mathematicians do have time to think and, more satisfying still, power to effect change in even quite large organizations.

A few discreet inquiries established that, although six years into teaching, it was not too late to change. He found a TOPS-funded MSc course in Birmingham and a job with North Thames Gas in London.

Dierdre was equally frustrated. She loved "the preparation...finding interesting ways to present material...exploring new areas ready for exams. One of the best moments was working really hard on *Twelfth Night* with a CSE group, taking them to a performance at Stratford and hearing them roar with laughter at the jokes."

School offered too few opportunities to interest and extend children "...working in discrete 40-minute packages, giving homework every Thursday, because that's what the timetable decrees, day, because that's what the timetable decrees, day, whether or not it's appropriate, having to be a social worker...not what I went into teaching for."

While Kevin retrained, Dierdre held the fort. She skims over that last year, with its nightmare slalom down the icy road each winter morning, storms which could burst open doors, carpeting the hall and stairs with snow, and the permanent, shattering exhaustion.

They moved to London resolving not to regret a Clun and to make the most of the capital. After a short spell in a graphics shop, Dierdre did supply teaching for the Inner London Education Authority. It finally convinced her that teaching was not for her.

"I'm a good disciplinarian. When I was at Kidderminster I used to get the difficult classes."

tion and a careful phasing out of the "game". In a remedial class of 12 year-olds the average reading age was around nine years. The staff teaching this class felt that they were too noisy, too slow in settling down to work and that their work-output was unacceptably low.

In an attempt to improve on this, a cassette like the one described above was used. During the daily half-hour English lesson the tape would be played and the children were instructed to place a stroke, on specially prepared sheets, if they were getting on with their work when the signal sounded. Marks were tallied at the end of the lesson and at the end of the week.

On the basis of the first week's results the teacher selected a weekly target score of 80 points. She promised as a reward for all children who met the target, a half hour free-time session at the end of the week in which they could choose what they wanted to do. The weekly target scores were raised gradually to 120 points.

In spite of the increasing target, only one child ever failed to reach it over the five weeks and cheating occurred only very rarely. The staff reported great improvement in both noise levels and the amount and quality of work completed. Word counts showed an increase from around 130 words per session, on average, to around 190 words using this self-reporting.

All of the studies reported here were simple to set up, used inexpensive materials, already to hand and could be carried through without any extra help. The behavioural approach to teaching is more fun for all concerned, and is cheap.

Kevin Wheldall is director of the Centre for Child Study at Birmingham University and Frank Merrett is a research fellow. They are joint authors of *Positive Teaching: the behavioural approach to teaching published early next year by Allen and Unwin.*

and regular personal and departmental appraisals ensure that he knows how well he is achieving his objectives; a far cry from the limbo of a scale 3 mathematician, i/c sixth form, curriculum development, university applicants, 4T in general and Billy the Kid in particular. There is, in fact, time and space to concentrate on the job in hand.

And Dierdre? "The pay is worse but then I don't mind that. Some time ago I took a decision that so long as we could get by, money wasn't going to be the main thing. The sort of people who employ me can't afford to pay more anyway."

"Having the freedom to develop the farm has been marvellous—to make policy decisions which will affect the way it is in five years time. I like being totally responsible for it."

"Inevitably there is a large element of teaching in it and I get tremendous pleasure out of sharing knowledge with anyone, child or adult, about caring for animals, putting on tack, looking after a sick animal, breeding goats or guinea pigs."

"When someone acquires a new skill, a new vocabulary, it enhances their self image. On the whole schools only seem to succeed in destroying people's self image. If, by coming here, someone gains more self respect, that gives me greater satisfaction than anything else."

"Then again I've met so many people—with rewarding jobs—skilled craftsmen—wood workers, smiths, sign writers, shopfitters. I wish I could go back into the schools and tell the children about all the interesting things you don't need O levels for."

"And the volunteers are marvellous—in the beginning they had to be taught how to do things, now they pick me up if something isn't just so."

What does cause her a great deal of heart-searching she says, is the plight of the "slow" school-leaver. Already several such youngsters have had a period of training at the farm, courtesy of the Manpower Services Commission. Working with animals in a small, caring environment which is part of the community, they develop confidence and the ability to take responsibility. At the end of the period they have to leave. It is probably the last job they will have.

If the rehearsals were long and painful they seem to have got their act together at last these two, even if they can't quite shake off the last traces of chalk dust.

"What always surprises me," muses Kevin, "is how people still recognize me as a teacher! Personally I think they just know that I was one once and play on it."

Dierdre laughed. "It's your manner...the way you always let everyone have their say first and then go ahead and do exactly what you planned in the first place. Just like a teacher."

Once a teacher... This is the last in our present series of Once a Teacher

REVIEW

Raoul Dufy lived in an enchanted world. He knew everybody and went everywhere at a time when the Riviera belonged to high society. He responded to the stylish activity of regattas, races, and elegant playgrounds with unabashed delight, marshalling flags, yachts, dancing light on water, or jockeys' brilliant satins in a blaze of charm. Even the cobalt air is alive with patterns of birds and butterflies. He suggests complexity and ornamentation in the shorthand style of a great designer and colourist, so it is not surprising to find that from 1911, for two decades, he turned to textile design as a profitable extension of his art.

The famous costumier Paul Poiret commissioned Dufy as textile designer for his dress fabrics. He rented a workshop for him in Paris and provided all the dyes and equipment needed for the techniques of printing on cloth. A dye chemist was engaged whose knowledge included the use of silk screen and aniline dyes. In 1912, the celebrated silk manufacturer Bianchini-Ferrier signed a contract for Dufy's designs which continued for 15 years.

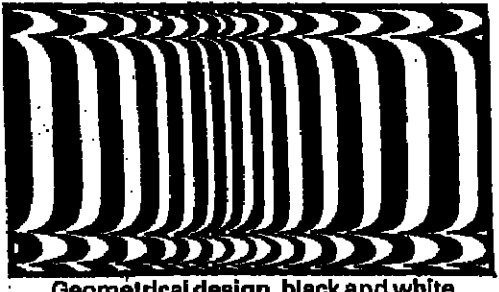
The Hayward exhibition includes a collection of fabric designs, printed and woven fabrics, tapestries, wall hangings, and four examples of Poiret's exclusive model clothes made from Dufy's printed or woven cloth. The designs reveal a wide variety of stimuli from flowers to Cubism, from classical and oriental art to negro art, from jazz to folk art. Even child art contributed to some consciously naive designs, inspired by visits to a French primary school. The little girls came to his workshop to help charge the printing blocks with colour.

Poiret was an exceptional patron who constantly provided Dufy with challenging work: preparing flags, awnings, and wall hangings for fetes, as well as his constant demand for printed material. The wall hangings, which, because of their size are stitched together in lengths, were painted with mordant dyes and wax applied with a tinning which fed the hot wax out of a copper spout, thus preventing the dye from bleeding onto the surrounding area.

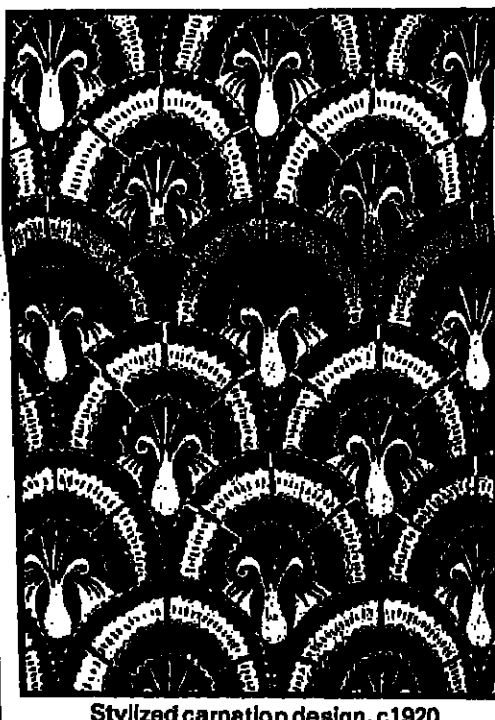
It is hard to imagine a more stimulating exhibition for students of textiles, painting, or any other branch of fine art. Everything is there: block and screen printing, hand painting, tapestry, woven brocades, and all approached with a free use and mixture of techniques by a master of colour and decoration. If sometimes in all Dufy's work the charm and prettiness seems too cloying, it is because he skated on the dangerous ice of visual seduction. If he occasionally fell through we should be magnanimous.

Betty Tadman

School and college groups are advised to make application to the gallery superintendent before their visit.



Geometrical design, black and white



Stylized carnation design, c1920



Dufy in front of "La Seine, l'Oise et la Marne"

An enchanted world

Raoul Dufy, at the Hayward Gallery, puts the work of an often underrated artist on dazzling display.

Betty Tadman reviews the textile designs, and Michael Clarke reviews the paintings



"Baigneuse aux trois papillons," 1936

Lumped with the Fauves in the history books, Dufy's pictures before the First World War now look more like a preparation for his later maturity than statements in their own right. Even the most brilliant of them, a row of old houses beside the harbour at Honfleur, is only the discovery of that chromatic keyboard on which he was to compose much more glittering and lyrical tunes. And beside the expansive canvases of the Twenties and Thirties, the three 1915 versions of "Homage to a Mozart", admirable though they are, appear constricted and confused.

Yet it is this later work that the history books usually ignore. Dufy may be less original than the artists who so clearly influenced him but his debts are openly acknowledged and fully absorbed into paintings that could be by nobody else. The staccato brush-strokes and strident blue and yellow-orange of a cornfield by Van Gogh become delicate calligraphy and mellifluous colour in the hands of Dufy. This may be too decorative and saccharine for some but it is the very essence of Dufy's hedonistic art – and this is what is unstintingly celebrated in this Hayward show.

Despite the presence of steamships, flapper dresses and studies for a huge mural on the history of electricity, Dufy's vision is of a world before The Fall. Plump nudes lounge in abandoned poses and the repeated presence of fruit, flowers and butterflies suggests endless summertime. Everything is so transparently weightless that in "The Artist and His Model" (1929), we see distant promenaders through a closed door and the boats out at sea occupy the same space as the opulent Venus on the studio floor. Conventional constraint is everywhere transcended: colour overflows the contours of the form like the lingering cadence of a song.

Musical references and analogies abound. In "Deauville Harbour" (1928), Dufy unites sea and sky into a single sonorous expanse of blue, draws in the waves like dancing crotchets and quavers and turns the tall masts of the yachts into great chords of pink and orange. Rhythmic repetition, alternation and a tingling sense of spatial interval are common to his paintings and his very sophisticated textile designs, and in the printed linen hangings that he did for Paul Poiret in 1925, his mastery of abstract design is subtly displayed. "The Admiralty Reception" employs visual accent and omission as a metaphor for witty conversation and has the figures composed across a triple band of colour like the notes of a musical score.

Michael Clarke



Detail from "Les regates," 1936

Love and justice

Tim O'Keeffe reviews the biography of a pioneering social critic whose novels are suddenly back in vogue



Inside Outsider: The Life and Times of Colin MacInnes. By Tony Gould. Chatto & Windus £12.50. 0 7011 2678 7.

Colin MacInnes was the kind of writer more likely to receive a sitting ovation than the prevalent one. He was rebarbative, querulous, exacting etc etc; he had the under-prized capacity to bite the hand that fed him. Mr Gould has written a most intelligent biography at an appropriate time, seven years after MacInnes was consigned to the sog of the southern shore of England. He catches a great deal of his personality, before it becomes "vanity's vapour now".

The offspring of a potentially great singer and of an immensely successful "popular" novelist, Angela Thirkell, MacInnes was born to the intellectual purple of this country: he was the grandson of Professor J. W. Mackail, a greatly distinguished classical scholar, and via that family was related through a reticulation of cousins to both the eminent and the powerful, notably Rudyard Kipling, Edward Burke-Jones and Stanley Gaudin. Given his later style of life, the title of his book is more than appropriate. The shifts and permutations of such an intellectual dynasty have long fascinated people, notably John Maynard Keynes, who unravelled some of the twists in that scientific and artistic world whose exemplar was the Darwin family. Though he became rebellious, MacInnes was well aware of the dignity and responsibility of belonging to the clan.

Angela Thirkell rejected MacInnes' father (alcoholism and violence) and when she was able to, fled from Australia, leaving her young family in something of a predicament but the Australian experience had very much suited him. Boy

Scouts, the open air and all. On returning to London in the Thirties he found himself at something of a loss, thinking of pursuing a course in painting and draughtsmanship.

He decided that he did not have the talent and, through family connexions, took on what must have seemed to be one of the most unglamorous jobs in the world, though he did later revert to the idea of art training. He became a dogbody for the Imperial Continental Gas Association in Belgium (that firm had its own murky glamour, though) and found some congenial friends. French friends in later life claimed that he still spoke French with a Belgian accent, while MacInnes, grateful for his early experience there, could conduct an almost passionate (vitriolic if necessary) defence of that much maligned country. One of his best friends was a painter, Maynard Isenhardt, someone for whose personality and work he deeply cared: his homosexuality intervened later.

Like so many others before him and at the time MacInnes was dazzled a little by Germany and Mr Gould thinks he might even have flirted with right-wing ideas there. The war, however, put him into the British army; one of his best books, *To the Victors the Spoils*, shows what that experience began to lead him to. He began writing originally with a rather tentative novel, *June in Her Spring*, set in Australia and he was punctilious enough many years later to thank the latter book's first publisher for taking a chance with him. He served in Gibraltar and Occupied Germany in military intelligence, was proud to have reached the rank of sergeant, deeming it to be the only rank in the army that mattered. When asked if in his intelligence function of questioning the many wisps and strays, double-doggers and thimblerig men that such a job inevitably involves, whether he would "use torture" to

produce information, he answered yes. To save others' lives. Very chilling, perhaps, but the times were uncommonly dangerous.

After the war he made a name for himself on the BBC. One recalled that at one session of a programme called *The Critics* all four contributors were homosexual. That amused him. It wasn't until the publication of novels like *City of Spades*, *Absolute Beginners* and *Mr Love and Justice* that he found his true voice, though except for George Orwell there was no finer and original social critic, someone working at the coalface of tough times. He had all his life been fascinated by Kipling and it can be deduced from the confidence of his prose (itself highly mannered) that he had him on the book. It was a great pity that he did not live to produce the book on Kipling that a lifetime of admiration, speculation and hostility might have given us. In his youth, Kipling's widow had rebuffed him, presumably for the wrong reasons. Her husband would have seen deeper.

Travels to Africa (often hair-raising for his official hosts) and a long-standing fascination with West Indian language and mores gave him wider horizons than most of us can muster. He did actually know what it was like to be fitted up for being in possession of pot or of getting a police beating up. He had a good idea in his disarming police interrogations demanding proof of identity: he produced a blood donor's document, a simple letter on ethics and self-won, over a time he was writing excellent, dispassionate criticism. The three key novels have opened the eyes of more generations than one, suddenly they are back in vogue. MacInnes nearly always asked three questions about everything: What's the man/woman and strays, double-doggers and thimblerig men that such a job inevitably involves, whether he would "use torture" to

The key to Kennedy's White House

Brian Morton reviews Central's trilogy

Kennedy, Central TV, November 20, 21, 22.

When John F. Kennedy died in November 1963, I was at school in Dunoon on the west of Scotland. The only thing that set us apart and made the event particularly significant was the fact that Dunoon overlooks the reaches of Holy Loch, site of the US Navy Polaris base. In the days that followed the assassination, the local American population retreated into a grief we could only share vicariously or sympathetically.

Cries looked at the stunned faces and wondered about the state of nuclear readiness: 2000 megatons on its doorstep gives a small town political ideas about its station. People my age simply wondered how the death of a public figure, a politician, could inspire so much sorrow.

For the first time since Lincoln (a tragic precedent) the White House had been occupied by a man who represented ideals. Everything about Kennedy had been different: he was young (only Theodore Roosevelt had entered the White House younger), potent, glamorous and Catholic. He was a war hero, where Eisenhower had been a military bureaucrat. He had a beautiful wife and the nearest thing the US offered to aristocratic blood. Kennedy's election in 1960 looked dangerously like a Restoration after years of depression, war, and nervy, repressive Cold War.

For all the talk of the "whole man" and the "whole story", little new emerges in *Kennedy*. The three films cover JFK's 1,037 days in power (always rounded to a neat thousand, a sad echo of a moment of realism in the inaugural address). In the part, Martin Sheen is unsentimental, even restrained. Without grandstanding, he has managed to catch JFK's voice and mannerisms perfectly: the Harvard bray, the slight speech impediment Jimmy Carter mimicked, the strange inflections; the nervous fiddling with buttons and tie, smoothing the hair, the wall-eyed glare. Central casting took a hammering to assemble a striking array of convincing look-alikes, notably Blair Brown as John F. Kennedy; RFK, LBJ, Allen Dulles, McNamara and Hoover



Martin Sheen: JFK's voice and mannerisms

(overdone); E. G. Marshall is brilliant as the patriarch Joe Kennedy Sr.

For all the assemblage of historic names, *Kennedy* is a personal film with a sure and realistic feel for the ironies of public and private selves, inner and outer, desire and fact. Though faithful to events and to the recollections of those who knew JFK, there has been no attempt to reduce one to the other, to debunk or glorify. The most affecting and powerful moments are those when the public record is set against the private reactions of family, friends, JFK himself, having said that, there is nothing voyeuristic about the film. Television dominated the Kennedy administration and marked a new direction in American politics. Television links the outer and inner, the public and domestic, in a new way. Reg Gadney and Jim Goddard, the scriptwriter and director, have used the television screen as a powerful prop: we see Hoover watch the Inaugural speech, excluded, brooding; we see the Kennedy clan watch Martin Luther King's "dream" speech in awed admiration; election night is a confusion of TV tubes and nervy humour.

With the sole exception of the assassination, played out for suspense, our forewarned shock set against Jackie's calm, the films never lean on the events they portray. There is no inconsistency. In such drama, between foreknowledge of the outcome and dramatic tension. Here, though, there is no attempt to milk the adrenalin; in the process, an important truth is revealed. The Cuban missile crisis was our closest brush with disaster. In *Kennedy*, the situation is portrayed as an intellectual problem (however angry or fearful); Kennedy's response to the crisis is completely unintuitive, dependent on weighing a range of points of view, military (the Joint Chiefs), political (Rusk) and moral (Bobby). Through Cuba, Kennedy identified the forces that made up American and world politics. He could be a sentimental leader, but he was not. Kennedy's decision to concentrate on Kennedy's response to King's speech and the Cabinet debates on Cuba, rather than on the more obvious points of tension, was an intelligent one. Kennedy always saw "peril" and "opportunity" side by side

and Cuba was also, easily forgotten, an opportunity. In 1962 the world had four leaders, JFK, Khrushchev, Macmillan and de Gaulle, who for the first time since Pitt and Napoleon thought in terms of world politics; nuclear weapons merely upped the ante. For Kennedy, Cuba was a profound expression of the Western alliance, the power of the military and the Foreign Relations Committee, the power of the Presidency.

Kennedy was not an academic but an intellectual. Everything he did and said as president was the result of thought. Whether that comforts or terrifies is largely a matter of perspective. He had the good fortune to follow a president who put on the White House lawn and thought John Donne was a First World War poet. However, he died too soon to make his challenge on entrenched power; Dallas was a victory for the old interests. Bobby Kennedy, a strong performance from John Shea, lived too short and constrained a political life to have carried the game on more than a yard or two. When John Kennedy died, politics was restored to the old and fro of emotion and cynicism. For three years, *mind* had provided a middle ground. There was a hideous irony in the bullets' target: intelligence, in both senses, was the key to Kennedy's White House.

Before I left Dunoon, I heard a story repeated among young Americans that JFK had actually been saved in the Trauma Room of the Parkland Hospital and that he survived, a vegetable, on a remote island in the Florida Keys. There was too much of Kennedy to die with the physical man, like King Arthur (to whom he was often compared) or Barbarossa, he seemed only to have been stolen away to some limbo. The keynote of this week's discussions and recollections was the wasted promise of the Kennedy years. If it's a trite response to untimely death, it's exceptionally true of John Kennedy. Much of his energy survived until lesser men diluted and misdirected it. Kennedy's ability to think was remarkable. His successors, even Nixon, the man he beat in 1960, betrayed his vision not by being weak or evil but simply by being less intelligent.

Readers and writers

Birmingham's First Festival of Readers and Writers at the Midlands Arts Centre (November 7-20) has aimed for popular, not highbrow, appeal. Enthusiasm has been high over the two weeks, with quite distinct audiences for different events: feminists for Irma Kurtz; local arts dignitaries to question Lord Goring; pop poetry fans in droves to the Liverpool Poets. Each to his own, inevitably, since cost alone (a not unreasonable £2 average per event) would preclude over-indulgence.

The most stimulating events have all involved unlikely combinations on the platform. In "Expressions of Self" Professor David Lodge and columnist, travel-writer Jill Tweedie touched on the difficulties of "fiction writing" and "truth-telling." Ms Tweedie's disarming but witty introductory statement on ethics and self won over a supportive (largely female) audience to such an extent that David Lodge's reading of a very funny seduction scene extract from his forthcoming novel *Small Worlds* was attacked for being too much like a well-known literary critic. A week later the

"Writing Women" – Anita Brookner, Marina Warner and Irma Kurtz – read some spell-binding extracts from new works, the first two brilliant, the last moving. Ms Brookner's deftly-poised portrait of a reluctant bride stood out particularly, as did her witty remarks in the ensuing discussion.

The curious centre-piece of the Festival was the appearance on one stage of Lord Goring, Minister for the Arts, and Margherita Laski, Chairwoman of the Arts Council's Literature Panel (and, incidentally, the Festival's patron). She chose to read rhythmic Edwardian poems, with the Minister (a former poet himself) by V Sackville-West. Newport had the dust blown from it by Ms Laski; there might have been more topicality in Grey Goring's reading of Auden's pro-American piece "Fleet Visitors" than in his own, dated, "Outside Biba's". Later, all the awkward questions about YTS drama training and about literary magazines were professionally parried; with Ms Laski the more forthright.

But many book fans simply want a glimpse of their favourite's life, with out abrasive dissent, Jack Higgins

revealed something of his struggling progress from Belfast slums to tax-exile Jersey. If he was aggrieved about the dismissive treatment of thrillers by literary reviewers and defensive about his excessive success, he was certainly unapologetic about his popularity with readers. Margherita Drabble's more demure presentation of domestic insights and details from her three most recent novels came with a candid commentary on her accidental beginnings as a novelist. Ms Drabble encountered surprising audience resentment at the notion that Hampstead was thought to be U for a novel, Birmingham non-U.

Otherwise noteworthy: John Cooper Clarke's popularity; readings by James Berry, Roger Griffith, Adrian Mitchell; an exhibition of Fay Godwin's photographic studies of authors; the presentation of school-age young people at the many free fringe events and daytime activities; productive writing workshops; plenty of music. A festive ambience was created for a fortnight in Cannon Hill Park; a new biennial event is on the calendar, and off to a cracking start.

Alan Mahler

Sharing heroes

Those Glory Glory Days, Channel 4, November 17.

Those Glory Glory Days by Julie Welch was a sprawling sort of a play held together by blobs of nostalgia. If in doubt, you might say, bring on a black Morris Oxford. It dealt tenderly enough, though, with the adulation of four schoolgirls for the mighty Spurs team of 1960-61. Their obsession – and especially that of the central character, Julie – drove them into a series of tragicomic incidents and confrontations, while the real world of parental separations and school rules went on unheeded.

The central characters – St Trinianesque mini-harridans in gymslips, each of whom I surely met at the dawn of my own teaching career – were beautifully and unsentimentally played by Zoe Nathanson, Sara Sugarman, Cathy Murphy and Liz Campion. Miss Nathanson has been widely – and

rightly – praised for her expert rendering of the compulsive Julie, but I confess that it was the vivid techniques of Sara Sugarman which really had me hugging myself with glee. I was mesmerized by the amount of comic detail she pulled out of the scene in which Julie, in detention after school, was the object of wild signalling through a glass door by her friends.

The school scenes, in fact, were all delightful, and much enriched by the presence of Elizabeth Spriggs as the up-market schoolmarm. I particularly relished her domestic science lesson, its tone set by a large well-labelled drawing of a fairy cake. 1961 must have been about the last year in which girls shared their heroes with adults. Soon there came the Beatles, and now they all queue in the high street to see Culture Club. They know not what they are missing.

Gerald Haigh

NATD keynote

The unique capacity of The National Association for the Teaching of Drama to identify the issues of the day relating to educational drama and then find the speaker to supply the need, was illustrated once again last Saturday at Nottingham Playhouse. The association's annual lecture was given by Stuart Bennett of the Cockpit Theatre.

He opposed one definition of patrician culture – all received experience and values, demanding participation and submission – with a definition of a creative culture: giving value to what one makes in response to one's environment and circumstances. Identifying classroom drama with the latter view he went on to assert that it was an area unique within the curriculum.

Bob Godfrey

Outside world

Self, Here Theatre-in-Education Company

From time to time actors still get asked what they do during the day and how they survive in a long run. Now at least Gary Irvin, who for the past year has been playing the lead in *The Mousetrap* in the West End, has an answer. With some of the stagecrew of the world's longest-running play he has established a new theatre-in-education company.

Here Theatre have just previewed their first show *Self*. Written by John Luby, it is a two-hander for top secondary school audiences. Gary Irvin plays Gerald, a morose loner with no interest in life apart from his

television. Only when he is confronted by a visitor, is he able to come to terms with his plight and work through the adolescent crises of his past. By the end of the hour-long play he is finally strong enough to turn off his television: and face the world outside.

Although other West End companies have mounted "alternative" productions before – notably actors from London's other long-runner *No Sex, Please – We're British* who have this year been seen in two lunchtime fringe shows – John Luby believes that *Self* is the first-ever West End-based TIE production. He was encouraged by the reactions of both pupils and teachers during its preview performances and is at present finalizing details of a public run for the weeks prior to Christmas. Teachers interested in further details can contact him at Stage Door, St Martin's Theatre, West Street, Cambridge Circus, London, WC2H 9NH.

Hugh David

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LONDON BRIDGE

ARTS

Fanny and Jane

Mansfield Park. BBC2 Sundays, repeated Tuesdays. In six parts: part four on Sunday. Jane Eyre. BBC1 Sundays. In eleven parts: part eight on Sunday.

Why is it that television dramatizations so often seem to be true to the "spirit" of a novel rather than to its actual impact? Why do they make such efforts to present sympathetically heroes and heroines whom readers are quite content to dislike? And why do we applaud such efforts when they are successful?

BBC's *Mansfield Park*, for example, is making a very good case for the perennially unpopular Fanny Price, and it seems to me immaterial that in order to do so it is taking liberties with her "real" character. Sylvester Le Bon's Fanny can still take her symbolic place in the story, as representative of stability and order, without being sickly, shrinking or priggish. She's hardly boisterous, of course, but she has a quirky nervous energy, speaking rapidly and giving eccentric little nods and waves - that is delightful. She also gives quick, sharp facial reactions when she is shocked which are quite sufficient indication of the "real" character's immense capacity for silent disapproval.

Nothing quite so original has gone into the other characters, but they are all as well played as we've come to expect, with a particularly good performance from Samantha Bond as Maria Bertram. Only two of the interpretations disappoint: Anne Mansfield falls miles short of Mrs. Norris's full vindictiveness, and Angela Pleasance plays Lady Bertram not as a supreme killer but as a total imbecile.

Jane Eyre on BBC1 has a lot less going for it. The more dramatic and dynamic of the two novels, it is making a dreary serial. The sensational events are either presented in a prosaic way or - as in the case of the horse-chestnut tree struck by lightning - omitted altogether. Timothy Dalton has a marvellous voice but he is too young for Rochester, and he is so much taller than Zelah Clark's Jane that when they kiss there is some danger of her breaking her neck. But the most damaging thing is that all the emotional climaxes hang on Jane's mute reaction to them - and Zelah Clark's expression in these situations is invariably one of blank stupefaction. Certainly Jane doesn't know what's going on, but she ought to look a bit more interested.

Lynne Truss

Next week

Jonathan Dimbleby reviews three new books about contemporary Russia; Geoff Fox on a children's writing symposium in New York; Lynne Truss reviews the new Mike Leigh play; Literary Competition.

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(383)

Loyalty to the flag

Philippa Davidson at the first two nights of the Schools Prom

Sir Edward Elgar (whose *Land of Hope and Glory* rounds off this concert in the best tradition) would have been pleased by the loyalty to the flag shown by the first night audience of the ninth season of Schools Proms. Union Jacks and red, white and blue helmets outnumbered school banners, prep school caps and woolly hats and, observing the fourth year of Coptic Comprehensive School pouring from their charabanc, one might have been forgiven for mistaking this auspicious occasion in the musical calendar for the Spurs-Aston Villa reply; that is, until the lights went down and Anthony Hopkins, no stranger to these occasions, introduced the Guildhall Junior Brass Band. Not a murmur spoiled their exquisite rendering of the traditional *Shepherd's Song*, but then brass bands, even at their quietest, sound well in the Albert Hall.

The programme for the Schools Proms is chosen from the specially commissioned entries in the National Festival of Music for Youth, the now annual three day event which takes place on the South Bank in July. The standard of performance is therefore undeniably high. But several problems remain: how to arrive at a musically varied programme that will not drive the adults to the bar during the loud bits or send the children restlessly perambulating as soon as the fair hearing to small ensembles and individual performers, making sure they are not swamped by the big bands; how to make sure that as many

aspects as possible of school music are represented. The choice of composers is also important. This time Anthony Hopkins was the audience to the effervescent Atarah Ben Tovim, the one setting the promenade in soothing Radio 4 manner, the other raising the temperature and then, like the deputy head, enforcing the rule of silence with a command and a gesture.

Musically, the Holmfirth High School Choir's sensitive performance of the Marx folk song *Ellen Mannin* was less effective than in the Royal Festival Hall, though the soloists could be clearly heard. On the other hand, the Jangle Band's unusual arrangement of the Rodrigo *Concierto de Aranjuez* (for recorders, electric guitars and synthesizer) was just as moving on a second hearing. The two violin-playing sisters from Thirsk with their Shostakovich waltzes (hard to believe these were written by the composer of the Leningrad Symphony) needed a Palm Court rather than the echoing vaults of the Albert Hall.

Visiting professional soloists are always a feature of the Schools Prom, and on Monday night it was the turn of double bassist Gary Karr to demonstrate the versatility of this instrument in two movements from a double bass concerto (discovered in manuscript form) by the eighteenth-century Italian composer Gregorio Allegri. The imaginative orchestration would seem to be the reason why no one performs this work, but a lyrical slow movement and a technically demanding third certainly go a long way towards dispelling any

misconceptions that the double bass is merely an accompanying instrument. The appearance of the legendary jazz pianist Stan Tracey was eagerly awaited but proved to be an anticlimax. He played the same number (his own *Afro Charlie meets White Rabbit*) on both nights, but there was little sense of rapport with either the Doncaster Youth Jazz Orchestra or the North Yorks EASY Band; perhaps it was because, as he said, he felt ill at ease performing a piece written before most of the members of the band were born. The DJYO's own pianist Alan Vinter, received an ovation for his part in the Benny Goodman number *Sing, Sing, Sing*, which also featured drummer Kenny Clare and had the promenadeers swaying and stomping excitedly.

No less rapturous a welcome was given to the Polish ambassador (though by this time even the stewards were receiving applause), present in honour of the guest appearance of the Polish folk dance group Rudki (by profession electro-mechanics) from Rzeszow. It is hard to connect their stately mazurkas and leaping sword dances with youth music in this country, but no one could have failed to be dazzled by the swirling peasant costumes, athletic twists and infectious rhythms of clarinets and accordion.

To my mind it was gratifying this year to see pop music finding a place in the Schools Proms, which although featuring an infinite variety of musical styles have not so far been noted for their coverage of pop. Miss Ben Tovim need not have worried that the music of

Actual Proof (playing, believe it or not, *Actual Proof*, written by themselves) would be heard on the ears of the young audience; almost certainly their decibel tolerance level was greater than her own. The jazz rock style of this group make it thoroughly respectable and it is hardly surprising that these self-taught musicians came top of the small combo class (judged by Graham Collier) which featured for the first time at the NFMV this year. It was a happy decision to precede Acual Proof by a choir in the most formal traditional of British music education, the Penwiddick School Choir. Their Welsh songs accompanied by harp were meticulously harmonized and musically flawless.

The Schools Proms bring together the crack youth orchestra, the robust northern wind band, the thoughtful flute quartet, and many others; they also provide the stage for the ordinary school orchestra which boasts no stars, and turn the spotlight on the youngest talent. No one at the first night will forget the diminutive Hunka sang trio (the star under-10 pupils of Sheila Nelson) playing their Locatelli Sonata, reminiscent of those serious criminal children in a Carmontelle watercolour.

The Schools Prom is sponsored by Commercial Union Assurance, The Rank Organisation and The Times Educational Supplement, and presented by Music for Youth, a non-profit-making company with charitable status, in which the sponsors are joined by the Association of Music Industries.

Living in order to live

World in Action Special: Devil's Advocate. Granada, November 21.

It was an inauspicious start: the familiar studio setting with the youthful audience ranked in tiers to the sides; then in (as it were) the arena the familiar figure of Gus Macdonald poised to ask more of his would-be provocative questions; and an opening statement from an earnest young member of the audience to the effect that what gave you dignity and self-respect was a job. Mercifully, things perked up later. We were allowed out of the studio. At least some of Gus's attempts at agenda-setting were subverted. And various people had much more interesting things to say about unemployment.

The people in question were the hundred unemployed in the 16-21 age group (minus the five currently in prison, one on a murder charge) brought together by Granada two years ago for the *Devil's Advocate* series. Two years later, 47 have found work, one as a local radio disc jockey, another as a member of an up-and-coming rock band. But the young man who was "really happy to have a job" as a caretaker was more typical. Of the remaining 53, some have turned to crime, others to parenthood.

Twenty-year-old Martin had been out of work for over two years when he was convicted of burglary. The mother of his child was only 15, and so did not qualify for State benefits. Unable to set up home together, he and the girl lived separately with their own pa-

rents. To see so much pain and anxiety on the face of one so young, as Martin attempted to justify his criminal activities on the grounds of poverty, was pitiful indeed. By the time he arrived in the studio he had dyed his hair blond (to cheer himself up?) but had developed a nervous tic. When asked what he had learned from his brush with the law, he replied "Don't get caught next time". He was only taking back from society what "they" had denied to him, and didn't see himself getting a job "unless it was slave labour". So much for the dignity of employment.

Christine was one of the 21 new parents (7 in 1981, 28 in 1983) and wasn't particularly keen on looking for work, the care of her son Sean being a full-time job in itself. What's more, she had persuaded her boyfriend Niall, Sean's father, to give up his job with British Rail, go on the dole, and share in the childcare. It was an arrangement which suited them both, and they were managing nicely on their £35 weekly benefit. What emerged from the studio discussion was that motherhood took the bitterness out of unemployment, and that to be a father was a more worthwhile role than that of, say, a kitchen porter. Christine and Niall may not be working in order to live, but neither are they living in order to work. They are living in order to live: a course of action which only the narrowly envious will condemn.

Martin, in his way, and Christine and Niall in theirs, are coming to terms with reality. We have all known for years now that full employment is a

thing of the past, and that the few jobs remaining for the unskilled are being soul-destroying, simply not worth the having. But precious little has been done by governments to prepare us for what has euphemistically been called the age of literature. Young people had to find out for themselves how to cope with it all. Martin's is the way of individual rebellion and revenge. Christine's and Niall's, though no less defiant of existing mores, is the way of readjustment.

There are of course other ways, the most obvious of which is collective action. But throughout the programme there was only one voice, that of Young Socialist Bob Macgregor, raised in its support. He got a sparse round of applause, but others lacked his compassion. It is easy to see why. When people work together or in similar trades, they can be organized collectively. It is rather more difficult to organize the unemployed, as the government must now know to its delight and the Labour Party to its sorrow.

Gus Macdonald rounded off the programme by accusing the audience of apathy and asking them when, if ever, we could expect the next wave of riots, but on the evidence of this programme alone I would guess that the best and quickest way to provoke a riot would be any curtailment or reduction in real terms of existing State benefits. And that meanwhile the crime rate will continue to rise.

Sheila MacLeod



Martin: don't get caught



Christine: I don't know how people cope

NAEA day

Arts educators should take political action against the government's education policies on the arts and education. This was the advice given by Sir Roy Shaw to members of the newly formed National Association for Education in the Arts.

Addressing a general meeting of the NAEA held this week at the London Institute of Education, the former Secretary-General of the Arts Council urged his audience to "resolutely oppose" the present blinkered view of education, which emphasized vocational training, to the neglect of general education and the "development of the whole man". "Don't hesitate to ally yourselves with criticisms of the

government's narrow utilitarian approach to education of its cutbacks in educational spending and arts subsidy expenditure," he said. He singled out as exemplifying this kind of policy the MSC's Youth Training Scheme, "which specifically discourages anything to do with anything so frivolous as the arts".

Sir Roy also argued that more needed to be done to living artist and educators together. "We have so far been more successful in stimulating educational activity, than in encouraging them to exploit the resources of appropriate educators," he said. "And often this educational activity, even by some of the national companies, leaves much to be desired, lacking the input of skilled professional educators." He took issue with the new Secretary-General, Luke Rutter, who, writing

in the current Arts Council *Educational Bulletin*, argued that "For many people, education suggests a dull, didactic approach, more likely to dampen enthusiasm and creativity than to stimulate it." Sir Roy said he found it "very sad but understandable" that this view had led to the successor to "question the policy which I established at the Arts Council of developing closer links with the education sector. What is needed is more thorough-going liaison, a partnership to which both educators and arts providers have complementary contributions to make".

Earlier in the day, the Association was told that its existence as presently constituted could prove "disruptive". Professor Bruce Aitcher read out a statement from the council of the Confederation of Art and Design Associations. The council criticized

the NAEA for failing to consult existing bodies, for duplicating other associations and thereby diluting resources, and for being unrepresentative of the arts as a whole because of a bias towards the performing arts.

A majority of members nevertheless made it clear that they felt the new association had an important function to fulfil as a network stretching across the arts. The meeting went on to agree in broad outline a draft constitution, and to elect its first committee, under the chairmanship of Malcolm Ross, from the University of Exeter School of Education.

Jonathan Croall

Jonathan Croall is editor of *Arts Express*, a new monthly arts and education magazine to be launched in February, 1984.

Gay apparel, poor little shifts

The Lisle Letters. Edited by Muriel St Clare Byrne. Selected and Arranged by Bridget Boland. Secker and Warburg £12.50.

There is something in the magnitude of Muriel St Clare Byrne's scholarly achievement in editing *The Lisle Letters*, and in the scope and age of the letters themselves, which has led reviewers to drag all their most decrepit superlatives out of the cupboard. Readers of most book pages will now be so overawed by all those rich tapestries, massive storehouses and yes, scholarly achievements vividly catching, eloquently conveying and joyfully embracing the human tragedy, the epic dilemma and the magnificent fall of the early Tudor era that they will have rushed out to their booksellers and will now be buried deep in the Complete Works of Agatha Christie.

How sad, if only reviewers had managed to get their breath back in time, they would have been able to scan their comparisons to Proust and Shakespeare (both to some extent, justified) into a final paragraph, leaving the rest of their space to showing how very exciting, very funny and -

above all - very frightening these letters are. In this brilliantly-edited version of the original six-volume edition, the narrative force of the letters becomes all the more nerve-racking, so that, towards their end (which is also the miserable end of the Lisle family) one shudders at each fresh, jolly greeting from Cromwell ("your most hearty friend") and each new happy report from Lisle ("I assure you I was never better welcome to the King's Majesty..."). I was never more have been since my coming") knowing that as the effusions become more florid, the real peril behind them becomes ever more intense.

Bridget Boland's abridgement necessarily emphasizes the hopes and fears of the main characters, in a way of which Miss Christie herself would have approved. There is Lord Lisle, elderly, solid and, finally, fatally unimagine; his wife, Honor, loyal, pushy, bossy and sharp; their long-suffering London agent, John Husee, increasingly aware of the duplicity of the Court ("It is hard trusting this wily world..."). There is nothing done nor spoken but it is with speed known in the court"; Thomas Cromwell, almost

Satanic in his manipulation of his fellows, reassurance forever preceding assassination, and, behind the ill-fated manoeuvring, of everyone, the ghostly but corpulent figure of King Henry VIII, his passions running hither and thither, now avid for more quails from Calais ("they must be very fat"), now outjumping even the most diligent interpreters of his, and consequently the nation's, religious beliefs, now destroying those once fated with his love.

Foreknowledge of the fate of the Lises - Lord Lisle was imprisoned for two years in the Tower facing charges of treason and died from a heart attack at the news of his release, prompting Francis Sandford to observe that "this King's Mercy was as fatal as his Judgments", and Lady Lisle "fell distraught of mind" - adds a tension even to those lengthy passages of everyday life one would normally find charming and reassuring. We would never have been able to read the fascinating details of the children's letters home ("I would heartily desire you to send me some demi-worsted for a gown, and a kirtle of velvet, and also some linen to make smocks, and some hosen and shoes. I send you back again the

gold ornaments which I brought with me, because I know not how to make use of them here.") or laugh at the misfortune of black sheep Lord Edmund Howard, who complains to Lady Lisle that "your said medicine hath done me little honesty, for it made me piss my head this night, for the which my wife hath sore beaten me, and saying it is children's parts to peep their head" if the Lisle letters had not originally been gathered by Cromwell to furnish evidence of treason. The shadow of the unforeseen future darkens even the most humdrum events, turning the smallest joys into momentary illusions. The fripperies so often celebrated by Lady Lisle in her letters, end up, like the letters themselves, seized by the state.

As Muriel St Clare Byrne notes, in her typically straightforward yet touching way, "There is something at once pitiful and terrifying about their mechanical throwing open of cupboard doors upon the skeletons of ostentation and carefulness, the gay apparel and the gorgeous jewels, the poor little shifts and the worn-out splendours..."

Craig Brown

Royal usurper

The Year of Three Kings: 1483. By Giles St Aubyn. Collins £11.95. 0 00 216899 8.

It is just 500 years since Richard, Duke of Gloucester, deposed his nephew Edward V and himself assumed the throne. The pathos of "the Princes in the Tower" and the drama of Richard's own reckless defiance at Bosworth have made his short reign part of every Englishman's historical consciousness. No character in Shakespeare has a more memorable final exit line. Something has been written on Richard III in every single generation since his death. His fascination - first that of the demon king, then that of the martyr to Tudor propaganda - never fades.

As the loser by a glacial in the dynastic stakes, Giles St Aubyn's book invites comparison with Desmond Seward's hostile biography, *Richard III: England's Black Legend* (Country Life). Both are popular works, but none the worse for that (though St Aubyn departs the issue of sovereignty as far less contentious than it was, and misleadingly compares the medieval Lord Chancellor with a modern prime minister). Comparable in length to Seward, St Aubyn is less copiously illustrated yet £2 dearer; he has rather more detail about the faithful year of the usurpation, as his title suggests, but considerably less about the rest of the reign; of Richard's early

life he says virtually nothing, preferring to concentrate on the general background.

The fundamental difference, however, is one of approach. Seward sifts the evidence, cross-examining witnesses and scrutinizing each exhibit like a prosecuting counsel, while St Aubyn, witty, trenchant and urbane, takes the part of the judge, reconstructing the known events in sequence and reserving his criticism of the witnesses for two separate chapters: one on the sources and one on the later controversies.

St Aubyn has a useful *dramatis personae*, but banishes footnote references from his text; this makes for a smoother read, but his own system breaks down when the phrases commented on are not quotations. The picture that emerges is much the same as Seward's: a tormented, contradictory personality, to some extent the victim of divisions sown by his elder brother, stumbling from one expedient to another (almost "too clever by half"), but quite ruthless enough to have murdered his nephews.

And yet this Richard, like Hitler and Stalin to whom he has been compared, is less alarming than some people affect to think. It is easy to give orders for other men's deaths. What gives pause for thought is the ability of countless ordinary people to carry out the orders.

Anthony Turner

Owing to a printer's error, two lines of a paragraph in our review last week of John Haffenden's biography, *The Life of John Berriman*, were lost. The article should have read as follows: "Haffenden's purpose is to explore the psychology of the man and to relate this to the work; he makes no claim to set Berriman in the context of his literary epoch, a job which will presumably be done in due course by the

inevitable queue of PhD seekers as well as by the professional critics." (Routledge and Kegan Paul £3.95.)

Frieda Lawrence's "Not I, but the Wind ...", in which an extraordinary literary union is chronicled, has just been republished by Granada (£1.95), with an introduction by Margaret Drabble.

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An English lady walking, c1540 - one of several drawings by Holbein which illustrate *The Sixteenth Century* by Jane Ashelford in Batsford's Visual History of Costume Series (£9.95).

Classicist

Otto Klemperer: His Life and Times. Volume 1: 1885-1933. By Peter Heyworth. Cambridge University Press £15.0 521 24293 2

Among the great conductors of his generation - Purcell, Toccini, Walter - Klemperer's place is secure. He was the purist, the stern classicist; many consider his Bach, Beethoven and Brahms unrivalled. None the less, it may fairly be asked if he merits a biography which when completed will be at least 800 pages long. The answer in this case is yes, for Peter Heyworth's painstaking research has illuminated not just one musician's life but the musical climate of Germany before the advent of Hitler. Klemperer's career, as he rose through provincial theatres to become director of the Kroll Opera in Berlin during its brief flowering - the very symbol of the Weimar Republic's doomed idealism - takes on a mythic quality. That he was also a manic-depressive heightens the drama - a drama whose first act ends with Klemperer, a Jewish convert to Catholicism, being forced to leave his native land in 1933.

During his manic periods Klemperer composed would have preferred to be remembered as a composer. Heyworth clearly regards his music as unimportant, but it seems a pity in such a detailed book not to have a single music example. One hopes a general assessment of Klemperer as composer is being reserved for Volume 2.

David Matthews

Letter days

The Letters of John Middleton Murry to Katherine Mansfield. Edited by C. A. Hankin. Constable £9.95. 0 09 462950 1.

"How one feeds on letters! I don't think other people understand... the dull paralysing emptiness that comes... when days pass without [them]." Katherine Mansfield's correspondence is heavy with laments and reproaches concerning the non-arrival of letters. While she spent long winters abroad finding out tuberculosis her husband Murry remained in London editing a literary paper. Her letters to him often reveal her to be lonely and unhappy; she is sometimes bitter towards him for letting her suffer alone. And she often accuses him of not writing to her. It is interesting therefore to have now Murry's side of the correspondence, which reveals that he wrote often and devotedly, and that he suffered as much as she did when post was delayed. Indeed, the opening quotation is from him.

Murry's letters have only marginal literary interest. Unlike Katherine he has little genius for description, and he undertakes his narration of everyday things - his work, his meetings with Bloomsbury lions, the behaviour of his cats - with few pretensions. "You are the genius," he declares, "and I ain't". Where the letters are useful is in demonstrating the pathetic inadequacy of his response to Katherine's emotional needs. His over-fidding idea is that Katherine is unhappy only because she doesn't believe that he loves her. Whenever she complains, therefore, he again reiterates his undying devotion and at the same time reproaches her for hurting him with her doubts and accusations. While he seems to be the ultimate caring husband, therefore, he is effectively protecting himself from the need to understand.

Lynne Truss

Boning up

Whether you touch briefly with first-years on our flint-knapping forebears, look forward to archaeological studies for 16-plots, or contemplate major excavations behind the dining-hall, you will find help and guidance in the Council for British Archaeology's enlarged *Archaeological Resources Handbook for Teachers*, available at £2.50 post-free from 112 Kemington Road, London SE11 6RE (0 906780 33 0). M J Corbishley, its editor, knows all about encouraging children and teachers to enjoy the excitement of discovery and deduction. His contributors are enthusiasts who supply ideas, examples and extensive (if uncritical) lists of books, slides, films, institutions and people, all of them helpful. There are also dire warnings about what not to do with a metal-detector.

Tom Corfe

CONFLICT AND LANGUAGE PLANNING IN QUEBEC

Edited by Richard Y. Bourhis

The many issues raised by this book concern not only Canadian readers but also all those involved in fields such as political science, sociology, education, sociolinguistics, language planning and social psychology. This volume will help readers better appreciate the issues raised by decisions such as Bill 101 in Quebec. Above all it shows that LANGUAGE CAN BE PLANNED.

300 Pages December 1983
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Brian M. Bullivant

136 Pages November 1983
Pbk 0-905028-26-0 £3.90
Hbk 0-905028-27-9 £9.80

THE BILINGUAL FAMILY NEWSLETTER

Edited by George Saunders

It is envisaged that each issue of *The Bilingual Family Newsletter* will contain:

1. A fairly short main article, written for the general reader, but incorporating current research and thinking on bilingualism.
2. A second article by a member of the advisory board or another contributor relating their personal experiences.
3. A correspondence section where parents, and children, can exchange views.
4. A question and answer section in which members of the advisory board will suggest answers to reader's queries and problems.

The first issue of *THE BILINGUAL FAMILY NEWSLETTER* will appear in February 1984. There will be FOUR ISSUES a year and overseas subscribers will receive their issues by air.

Price £3.00 p.a. for individual family subscribers.

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BOOKS

Against academic expansionism

Linguistics and the Teacher. Edited by Ronald Carter. Routledge and Kegan Paul £5.95.

This is a book with a programme; language is important in teaching and learning; therefore all teachers need courses in linguistics. The first part of the argument can easily be conceded; language, in various senses of the word, is indeed important to teachers. Does it follow, as the linguists who wrote this book seek to persuade us, that teachers can best come to understand the part played by language in teaching and learning by means of courses in general linguistics? I believe that this second part of the book's programme is misleading and unacceptable.

Several of the contributors, notably Peter Gannon and Katherine Perera, are able to show that linguistic knowledge can sometimes be helpful to teachers in clarifying pedagogical issues. Does this knowledge have to take the form of a full-scale study of phonology, syntax, semantics and discourse structure, as the contributors believe? Some of the examples given certainly would not require a fully systematic knowledge of linguistics. Peter Gannon provides an interesting discussion of the errors in a piece of

writing, but does not convince me that all the (often admirable) points he makes are dependent on his knowledge of linguistics. I suspect that they would be no more likely to occur to most linguists than to most non-linguists.

Some of the evidence in the book says the opposite to what was apparently intended. Richard Hudson provides a list of statements about language which most linguists would agree with; this he does with a minimum of technical language, and certainly without using the detailed analytical systems that the authors say all teachers need to be familiar with. Arthur Brookes places beside this a list of questions that teachers might ask of linguistics, such as: How much should the teacher speak? What kind of speaking is most related to learning? What part can drama play in developing a child's spoken language? What is the full range of meaning one can get from a piece of spoken English? Linguists are no better placed than anyone else to answer such questions.

The questions generated by practical teaching do not belong in the same frame of reference as the questions normally (and properly) proposed by general linguistics. Linguistics has its own frames of reference and its own problems to solve. The question is: to

understand the functions of language in schooling do teachers need to study language within the framework of authority provided by linguistics or can they make other ways of refining and making over their intuitive knowledge? Can they borrow from linguistics or must they swallow it whole?

In the past linguists have often spoiled their own case by providing inappropriate courses, and I do not find in the least reassuring the schemes of work sketched here, in spite of some large and vague claims to the existence of new and highly relevant knowledge. What we have here is a bid to capture academic territory. We see this at its most extreme in Sinclair's paper, in which it is made clear that no one who has not submitted to a thorough course in linguistics should dare to discuss language. It seems to be very threatening to some academics if teachers believe that they can think without previous official certification. If we let linguistics into courses for teachers it will be at the cost of losing close focus on practical issues, since the relevances will be controlled by linguists and not by educators. The sample course-outline provided by Sinclair reinforces this belief.

One aspect of this book is undesirable in another way. In several of the papers there appear shadowy and

apparently evil figures known as "mediators", who want teachers to use ideas from linguistics without benefit of clergy - without undergoing training, that is. These mediators are never named nor explicitly quoted but foolish opinions are attributed to them so that they may be scornfully dismissed. (Whoever argued that linguistics is too difficult for teachers? Or that it is useless because linguists disagree? Straw men!) One incautious contributor actually quotes approvingly from one of the mediators, Harold Rosen, but his name never appears; the notes fail to cite his article but merely refer to a volume in which it was once reprinted. Whatever one thinks of the central issues of the book, this is no way to conduct debate.

I wish to reassure that teachers can learn to talk more precisely about language, communication, and learning in the classroom without having first to certify their competence in Professor Sinclair's "finite systems" - which sometimes help and sometimes get in the way. Teacher-training needs to be protected against all kinds of academic expansionism. Teachers should defend their right to think for themselves, to choose what is relevant and useful, and to reject the rest.

Douglas Barnes

lingo

The Dictionary of the Teenage Revolution and its Aftermath. By Kenneth Hudson. Macmillan £12.95. 0 333 28517 4.

This book is full of "crap", "bollocks", "boobs" and "bunt" but there is no "bullshit". There are a great number of entries (so to speak) beginning with "f-" so if you are thinking of buying a copy for your "lady" for Christmas, you had better be warned. It is a dictionary of pop, punk and trendsville and you could argue that it is, although "a bit of a faze", finally unnecessary because the "guys" who use the words in it won't need it, while the "squares" who don't use them will find the "whole scene" rather "a nasty" and a bit of a "nause".

Right on - but not quite. For Hudson's dictionary is marvelously sardonic (a "muscle" and a "monster") and wonderfully subversive of so much recent pseudery from the catchphrases of the liberated sisterhood to the "consciousness-raising" rap of the "freaks" and "weirdos". If you were hooked on flower-power in the Sixties man, you will wince. It is enough to make editors of the fanzines "Flip". As Dr Johnson knew, dictionaries should be opinionated and this one is no "wimp-out" on that score.

It is hardly a coffee-table book - unless you take your coffee in a hip scene where it's all at - since both covers are decorated with the front and backside of a "ginormous" V-sign. But some of the entries are almost scholarly: the derivation of "Bruce" for Aussie; the revelation that "schmalz" originally means "dripping fat"; the long discourse on "quean" and "liden".

The dictionary nicely defines the flavour of the present age as pop, pap, pseudery and pretentiousness. From Beats to Post-punks we take our anxiety very seriously as is shown by the large number of words which indicate some sort of mental disturbance: "doomy", "downer", "bring down", "hang up", "up-tight", "dummer", "paranoia" and "schizo" as well as all entries beginning with "psych" and the "incredible" things that you can do with your "mind" - blow it, bend it, snap it, expand it, etc; in fact anything but think with it.

Mindlessness does not like order of course. Is that why the police (law and order - The Guardian's Law Now) get called many names? Bill Fuzz, Copper Filth, Law Fink, heat, Narc, and Pig? The police are called everything except "the force" - an expression which is reserved for its cosmic connotation from Star Wars.

Wittgenstein - who does not feature in here, not even as Ludwig or Ludwig - once said that to create a language is to create a world. The words in Hudson's dictionary were all coined or adopted by various passing "sub-cultures" in order to claim the world for themselves, to be "hip", "cool", in "swing", "the result" is that each succeeding "fad", "craze" or "scene" becomes shorter than the one that went before it, so that the newest pop-cult is obsolete almost before it has had the chance to be avant garde. The decline and fall of words themselves illustrates the point: in the Sixties "trendy" was a word of what Jane Austen would have called approbation; now it is a mark of derision. Those bright new things "fab", "square" and "switched-on" sound embarrassingly archaic.

All popular movements rely on shock tactics and there is enough "pliss" (up, on, over, take, etc.) and "shit" (heels, hot, less, on, list, beat the, and give a) to please even such as D H Lawrence. But Lawrence would not have been zapped out of his head to discover that some young people refer to the penis as "the machine". Cults which aim merely to shock are often surprisingly coy - as in the near universal "loo". There are some strange usages: "sail" as "a female sex partner" (what would the navy say) and "popper" as related to pop-music (what would His Holiness say). Have you ever met a "phallocrat"?

Disconcerting links between sex and violence become apparent in the glossary of "screw" words. Hudson succeeds in slamming the pseudos and the freaks without being heavy: I still wish he had found room for bullshit.

Reviewed by Peter Mullen

Career prospects

Working at a Light Engineering Plant; Working for a Brewery; Working at an Airport; Working for a Food Company; Working in the Police Force; Working on a Building Site; Working in a Department Store; Working in the Army; Working for a Chemicals Company; Working on a Farm. Wayland's People at Work series £4.95 each.

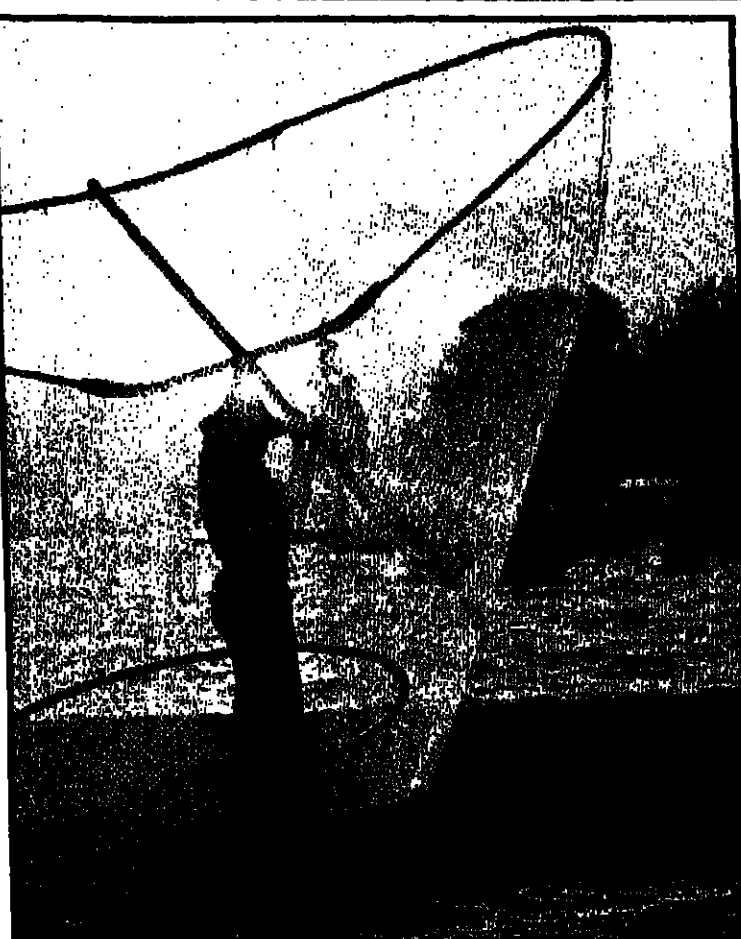
Working in the World of Music; Working with Children; Working as an Aircrew; Working as a Laboratory Technician; Working in a Hospital; Working with Horses; Working with Computers; Working in Art and Design. Batsford Careers series £5.95 and £6.50 each.

Facing Unemployment. By Guy Dauncey. Hobson's Press/CRAC £2.90. Your Job in the Eighties. By Ursula Mann. Pluto Press £2.50.

As the number of job opportunities decreases so the amount of careers literature seems to expand. Maybe the explanation is that these days, employment of any kind has a scarcity value which means it is worth writing about. And perhaps, also, the whole idea of a permanent job, a career with prospects, is becoming as remote to many youngsters as exotic foreign lands - fascinating to read about but unlikely to be directly experienced.

Certainly there will be a good many youngsters who could read with some interest the new titles from Wayland and Batsford without standing much chance of ever getting into the jobs described. None the less the books from both series are generally to be welcomed, demonstrating as they do that careers literature has a strong role to play in leading pupils into an understanding of adult responsibilities and the transition into maturity.

Slightly confusingly, both series have the same general titles ("Working for a Food Company" and "Working in the Police Force") and also share with COICs "Working in" series. However, in style they are markedly different. The most recent dozen or so books from Wayland are based around profiles of workers who are usually employed at a particular site or with one organization. Working for an Electronics Company is about employees of Racal Group Services. Working at a Light Engineering Plant is about Lucas CAV, and Working for a Food Company is about Heinz. Obviously there are major limitations attached to this kind of approach, in so far as the accounts lack the kind of breadth which many careers advisers and teachers would look for. On the other hand the profiles are almost unfailingly



A Mexican fisherman casts his net. This is one of the photographs in *People at Work*, another volume in Macmillan's International Picture Library. Impressive photographs from around the world accompany minimal text. (£4.50).

interesting, easy to read and have the kind of personal detail which brings out the interweaving of private life with the experience of work.

Overall therefore, the Wayland series makes a nice read, especially for quite young secondary pupils who may not have started any formal careers education. Working at an Airport, Working for the Police Force and Working in the Army will, I imagine, be particularly popular titles meeting exactly the needs of the semi-fantasy stage of careers' thinking which many 12 and 13-year-olds are still in. I doubt whether Working for a Brewery or Working at a Light Engineering Plant will create the same interest, yet both of them contain a lot of practical occupational information which could make good source material for careers education sessions. My only reservation is the absence of any real analysis of the experience of the people who are profiled, and a little more editorial comment would have been useful.

The Batsford books are in the other direction. With their 100-plus pages of dense and solid text they are strong on fact and comment but, in some cases, lack human interest. Their appeal will be restricted, I think, to the very keen student who is prepared to gobble up anything about their chosen career. This is a shame because the authors are mostly experienced members of the profession concerned and could prob-

ably have given greater insight through a rather more relaxed, less earnest, style. Even so the books have clearly been well-researched and contain a tremendous amount of useful information. The three which I particularly liked and found more stimulating than the rest were Working as Aircrew, Working with Children and Working in the World of Music.

Guy Dauncey (already known for his *Unemployment Handbook*) has continued his good work by producing *Facing Unemployment*, a real bumper book full of useful information, advice, checklists and exercises. It should certainly make a contribution to the off-the-job element of YTS, to the work of "drop in centres" for the unemployed, and, used selectively, could be helpful to 14 and 16-year-olds.

Your Job in the Eighties is more of a puzzle. In taking up the issue of the impact of new technology on jobs (particularly women's jobs) it is dealing with what has become, already, a familiar subject. Where it can be interesting and useful is through the feminist and trades union slant with which it approaches and analyses the outcome of these developments. My complaint is the extraordinary arrogance of the author in asserting that only women can solve the resulting problems!

Edward Fennell

Personality plus

Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother. By Alan Hamilton. Ian Botham. By Andrew Langley. Chris Bonington. By Rob Hamer. Roald Dahl. By Chris Powling. Hamish Hamilton Profiles £3.50 each.

The First Men Round the World. By Andrew Langley. The War Poets. By Christopher Martin. Founders of America. By Patrick Allitt. The Cinema Greats. By Jeremy Pascal. Wayland. In Profile £4.50 each.

If the publishers' lists are any guide there is a market for biographies of famous people written for young readers. The purpose is wholly sound - you obviously learn much about a period by studying its major figures. And that, as they say, is about chaps. But the holding up of good examples is an honorable educational practice. The main disadvantage is that a book for children about a long and complicated career must perforce always simplify down to the very teetering edge of banality. Of the examples given, few manage to struggle far from this brink, but then neither are they any which fall right over.

Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother. By Alan Hamilton. Ian Botham. By Andrew Langley. Chris Bonington. By Rob Hamer. Roald Dahl. By Chris Powling. Hamish Hamilton Profiles £3.50 each.

Alan Hamilton's Profiles, of which this is a sample of recent titles, now covers some two dozen names, most of them contemporary and none earlier than Queen Victoria. They are all a jolly decent lot of folk - Sid Vicious does not yet rate a volume, nor even Kenny Everett - and the full list could be read as constituting a judgement upon the kind of heroes up to whom as Sir Winston might have said, our young people should be looking. That aside, each of the books is written by someone who has a special claim to know. They all read well and provide between them a comprehensive survey of the main trends and preoccupations of the past century or so. Alan Hamilton's book on the Queen Mother is as you would expect, standard gracious lady stuff. Chris Bonington and Ian Botham are both given the predictable schoolboy hero treatment. In all three cases there are obviously unplumbed and fascinating depths, and the fact that each sticks to the well known public tale merely serves to emphasize the limitations of the genre. That being said, Chris Powling's *Roald Dahl* manages to produce something a little extra. The choice of subject, given the established nature of the series, is unusual and imaginative, and Powling

does him more than adequate justice. The style is journalistic and indeed cleaves satisfyingly to the journalist's idea of what a profile is. We are taken to meet Dahl; to see him at work in his sleeping bag, and to hear all about his fuel injected BMW. There is also a good critical appraisal of his writing. This Profile is in many ways a cut above the rest. Wayland's In Profile books group their heroes and heroines together under thematic titles, and they are aimed at a slightly older audience, being suitable for background work on many external examination syllabuses. These books, too, are predictable and workmanlike. Of this recent selection I particularly like Christopher Martin's *The War Poets*, which does a difficult biographical and critical job with clarity and readability. The poets chosen are Brooke, Sassoon and Rosenberg. Each is given a brief biography laced with literary material and comment. The style is unpatronizing and to the point. The Wayland books are profusely and well illustrated - but then they cost a £1 each more than the Hamish Hamilton series.

Gerald Haigh

CHILDREN'S LITERATURE

Irish eyes

The Far Side of the Lough. By Polly Devlin. Illustrated by Ian Newsham. Victor Gollancz £5.50 0 575 03244 8.

A friend of *The Far Side of the Lough* might speak in these terms: Here is that splendid journalist Polly Devlin in a mood pastoral and pensive. How detailed and clear are the memories of her own childhood on the shore of Lough Neagh, and how exceptionally lively her retellings of seven stories of childhood she heard from Mary-Ellen Martin, the girl with red hair "and speckled eyes, and a face that was brown with freckles" who came to look after Polly and her five siblings (one of them, Marie, later married Siamus Heaney) when their mother died. It would be a hard heart that did not ache for Mary-Ellen when she joyfully shows her one and only mint china doll - just arrived from aunt in America - to her nearest neighbour (because she must show it off to somebody) who is busy clipping a hedge, and the neighbour "put the doll on the top step and took his shears in both hands and cut its head off". There lies the death of innocence! And the punishment for

the boy caught stealing Mary-Ellen's wild strawberries, the fascinating horror of pig slaughtering, the magic of the Pin Tree: yes, these stories shine with something of universal childhood. And how shrewd of Polly Devlin, too, to play to her own strength by writing a series of seven short (2000-2500 words) linked pieces, rather than be discovered wanting, in common with so many other panting journalists, over the longer distance. Really, this is nothing less than a charmer of a book.

A critic hostile to *The Far Side of the Lough* might say: One never thought to see the day when Victor Gollancz (whose founder hated so much as an inch of wasted blank paper) would stand indicted of such blatant book-making: 12 pages of preliminary matter, seven half-titles with seven blank verses, twenty-eight and a half pages of skillfully drawn but imaginatively impoverished pencil sketches by Ian Newsham, and a mere 59 pages of text. Fie on the hem! And the text itself: it is predictable center, it relies so heavily on rich idiom ("Sure you'd give anybody the scunder, you big bad tackle"), it has no social resonance. Isn't this one of those books that is published "For All Ages" precisely because its focus and aim are so uncertain, soon to be found on remainder shelves at one-tenth the price?

Mary-Ellen, however, might fix both worrying critics with a beady eye and, forthright as ever, ask, "Are you for finishing that porridge, or are you going to be sitting there all day, puddling?"

Kevin Crossley-Holland

Tried and tested

Living English. By R. A. Banks. Hodder and Stoughton £3.95. 0 340 24997 8.

Reviewers in these columns often describe textbooks as solid and traditional. What they mean, of course, is that the books are stodgy, old-fashioned, uninspired and generally disappointing - like any number of others piled up at the back of the stock-cupboard. This convenient critical semaphores breaks down in the face of *Living English*.

The one-volume (252-page) manual of examination English is solid and traditional, but in the best sense. Though packed and close-printed it is anything other than stodgy and uninspired. Quite the reverse; it is a highly-organized and well thought out guide to modern English usage, no more and no less. It makes no pretensions to foster creative writing other than for the purposes of examination composition, literature doesn't get a look in and there are no illustrations. Instead, the book boasts 130 sets of exercises (most with self-mark keys at

the back) and a 50-page section on grammar. Yet it still remains as lively, as down-to-earth and as interesting as is proper for such a work.

Intended to cover the requirements of students working towards English Language examinations at CSE, GCE, 16+, RSA or any other level as well as the needs of the interested general reader, it is necessarily thorough. To take one example: Chapter Nine is devoted to summaries - but broken down into separate sections on the summary proper, on summary and directed writing and on precis-writing to take account of the whims of different examining boards. The title is important too. Though - rightly - insisting on certain standards of grammatical correctness (there is even a note on the proper use of gerunds) the book happily acknowledges and will gish is a living language and will continue to change with use. A brave admission; made by a more pedantic and dogmatic volume it would be a declaration of its own obsolescence. *Living English*, however, will be around for some time.

Hugh David

Celtic Mythology

Proinsias Mac Cana

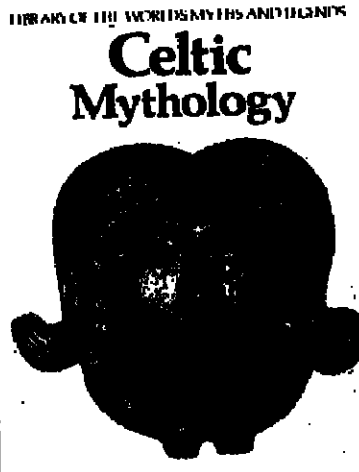
The great stories of supernatural creatures and super-human heroes which make up Celtic mythology nearly all derive from Ireland. Proinsias Mac Cana, Professor of Early Irish at University College, Dublin, sites this study of Celtic mythology firmly within the Irish traditions, showing the broader relevance of their ideas to all Celts. The text is fully illustrated with artefacts from Ireland, Britain and continental Europe, offering a perceptive view of the role of myths in the everyday life of the Celtic peoples.

144 pages, 54 colour and over 100 black-and-white illustrations, comprehensive index. ISBN 0 600 34289 1

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NEWNES BOOKS



PAPERBACKS

The Other

I'm Not Stiller. By Max Frisch. Translated by Michael Bullock. Penguin £2.95.

Homo Faber. By Max Frisch. Translated by Michael Bullock. Penguin £1.95.

The Outsider. By Albert Camus. Translated by John Leavis. Penguin £1.95.

The man without qualities belongs to the twentieth-century novel reacting against a view of character as a fixed set of features - the Other as we define him, not as he perceives himself. And this neatly-delineated Other can be judged, imprisoned and condemned: no wonder we rebel against the actual or figurative identity cards the world issues on us. But if not that, what are we? Stiller invents himself and his memories, knowing that in "an age of reproduction" when the media can transport us anywhere and psychology

Robin Buss



Pre-revolutionary rebellion in the early years of this century - getting rid of the Manchu-imposed pigtail. This is one of the arresting photographs illustrating *China - 100 Years of Revolution* by Harrison E Salisbury (Andre Deutsch £20.00), in which that country's recent history is vividly and lucidly told.

Keen self regard

As Once in May. By Antonia White. Edited by Susan Clancy. Virago £10.95. 0 6068 352 4.

Perhaps the tone of the confessional comes easily to Catholics. Antonia White's candour in these matches of her early autobiography recalls (as a candle to the sun) St Augustine's such intimate revelations of early thoughts and feelings made in such an ardent hope that the reader's sympathies are involved as if listening to a friend. But a friend who has suffered. There is always that sense in Ms White's writings, as of the dead, about to happen. Whereas with St Augustine it was God that was about to happen, and hence there is immensity in the confessions with Antonia White it was "the Beat" or outbreaks of insanity, and hence the tension in her

As her elder daughter, a skilful editor, remarks, she was not an easy woman. Passionate, wilful, demanding she tore through three marriages, several lovers, a spell in the Royal Bethlem Hospital and a Freudian analysis without diminishing one whit her absorption in herself. That keen self regard which made the *From May* quartet so compelling for women anxious to turn their regard upon themselves also informs the short stories, half-finished novels and piece of autobiography contained here. Antonia White's writing is as fascinating as looking in a mirror: the image dissolves, resolves, remains enigmatic. The textures of things remains impenetrably domestic; seamlessly everyday, yet within them personality moves, formless and puzzling. That is like real life. Victoria Newman

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628 pages, 320 illustrations, index. ISBN 0 600 33765 2

UK PRICE £12.95 net.

RESOURCES

Best of both media

Barry Fox visits a new video exhibition with the latest interactive video

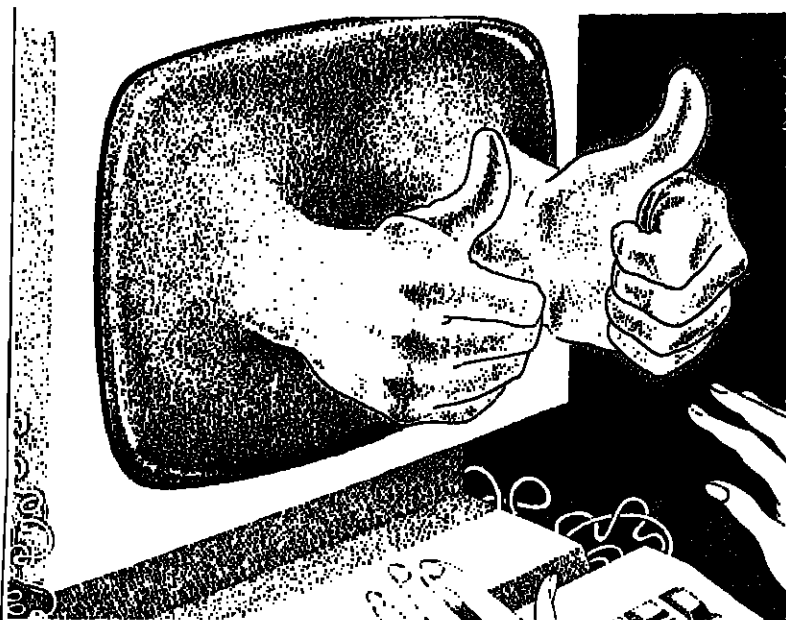
The video trade in Britain is still pursuing its dream of an ideal hall in an ideal place in which to stage the ideal exhibition of all that's new in television and video.

The latest industry bash was the Industrial Video and Communications Exhibition, IVAC, which ran from November 13 to 16 in the grounds of Alexandra Palace.

Sponsored by four large companies with professional and industrial video to sell (Hitachi, Sony, National Panasonic and Bell and Howell with JVC), IVAC might just survive. Despite the inaccessibility of Ally Pally and poor advance publicity, the IVAC exhibitors offered plenty to see for anyone with an interest in professional, industrial or semi-professional video.

Education authorities, for instance, could have learned a lot from IVAC - provided of course they knew about it in advance. My hunch is that they did not and this omission will have to be made good if the show is repeated.

Ironically the first IVAC show was stolen by Philips, not officially one of the main exhibitors. Although the Philips LaserVision videodisc is clearly



fitting on the domestic market, in the professional, industrial and educational fields it is suddenly breaking through. All those who prophesied that videodisc had come too late for domestic use, but would slowly become an established professional tool, are now being proved right.

The small team at Philips UK which has quietly been developing interactive videodisc systems, has noticed a marked upswing of interest over the last six months. Doubtless this is why Thorn-EMI, who adopted the rival VHD videodisc system made by JVC in Japan, has abandoned plans for a domestic launch but is now jumping on the bandwagon with an industrial-educational version of VHD. It goes on sale soon in Britain, perhaps too late to challenge the technically superb LaserVision system.

The big news for interactive videodiscs, announced at IVAC, was the firm order from IBM of £500,000 worth of Philips' new professional LaserVision players. These will be installed as a sales aid for IBM's new Personal Computer. The IBM PC and VP-835 LaserVision player are used

with a touch-sensitive television screen developed by Cameron Communications of Glasgow, and can be serviced through a disc pressed at the Philips factory in Blackburn. Although IBM is initially using the system to sell its own computers, this move marks the beginning of a new era of education and information technology in Europe.

The concept of interactive videodisc is so new and complicated that it has taken a long time for the idea to catch on. Potential users are only now understanding enough about the technology to recognize how they might benefit from using it. Here in brief is a run-down on how the new Philips system could be used, for instance in a school, how programme providers can use it and where the future is likely to lead us.

By now it is fairly well known that a LaserVision videodisc can store 54,000 separate TV pictures on each side, which can either give half-an-hour of moving video or 54,000 individual still pictures. Because the disc is read by a laser, there is no wear on it, so any one of these still pictures can be displayed for as long as is necessary. Each picture

is given an identifying number and can be accessed with 100 per cent accuracy and displayed after a search of only a few seconds.

The big question marks still hanging over the VHD system, are the length of time for which a still frame can be played without wear and degradation, and the accuracy of access. (Note here that VHD was originally adopted by Thorn-EMI because it was cheaper than LaserVision and thus ideal for domestic use. But it is not now being sold as a domestic system.)

Control of the LaserVision player can of course be by hand, through a keyboard on which the user types in the frame number or sequence to be displayed. But it can equally well be under the control of a computer. The new Philips VP-835 player has a computer built in as well as a standard RS232 computer interface on the side. It is through this interface that the LaserVision player hooks up to an outboard computer like the IBM. It also hooks up to a touch-sensitive television screen like the Cameron.

The computer circuits inside the LaserVision player and those inside the outboard computer "talk" to each other under the control of instructions given by the user by touching the screen. Questions appear on the screen as teletext messages, superimposed on the pictures coming from the videodisc. The teletext messages are generated by teletext encoder circuits inside the LaserVision player. These circuits are themselves controlled by instructions coming off a floppy disc in the outboard computer. Although this is complicated, the system is easy to use.

A LaserVision disc, for instance carrying an educational programme, is put on the player and the computer circuits inside the player are loaded with instructions on how to use the disc. These instructions can come either from a short burst of computer data in the videodisc soundtrack, from a floppy disc in the outboard computer or from a ROM cartridge plugged into the videodisc player, just like a video games cartridge.

The teletext circuits then put a menu up on the screen, for instance a choice of "learning" subjects. The student

touches the screen over the chosen subject. This simultaneously instructs both the disc player and the computer to search out the chosen sequence. The disc produces the chosen pictures and the computer triggers the teletext circuits to throw up matching words on the screen. From then on the student progresses simply by touching the screen in answer to questions. The system does the rest.

Within a few years schools could be receiving educational programs as a software package of videodiscs and floppy computer discs, for use with a videodisc and computer hardware package.

Teachers, or at least educational authorities, will be able to produce their own programs because Philips has written an authoring language called PHILVAS, which lets anyone with a personal computer (like the IBM or Apple II) write his or her own text and control instructions on to a floppy disc.

In America, already, business in amusement arcades is booming through the use of video games that use videodiscs. Live action is overlaid with graphics, for instance a gunfight against animation or film of a real street scene, with the players' scores controlling the videodisc to throw up new scenes on the screen. Tape cannot do the same job because it takes too long to access each sequence.

Although these disc game systems cost thousands of pounds, it is likely that within a few years home computer manufacturers will be selling low-cost control computers for use with low-cost videodisc players made by Philips or the Japanese.

The hidden benefit of all this is that any home with a computer-videodisc system bought for games playing, will also unwittingly have bought the hardware necessary for running educational disc programmes. A revolution in home education by videodisc will be entertainment-led. The prospect of the encyclopaedia salesman offering videodiscs and floppy discs instead of books, now looks very real.

Next week Barry Fox discusses Thorn-EMI's VHD videodisc system which will be launched in January for institutional use.

EXTRA ENGLISH

The shape of things to come

The 16-plus criteria have received the ministerial going-over. Bill Deller reflects on the uncertain future

We all may, I suppose, be forgiven for becoming a bit wearied by the seemingly interminable negotiations over the new 16-plus exams. Committed teachers of English have always found ways of doing their own thing within the present system (parts of the country, indeed, have been operating a unitary 16-plus system in English as a "pilot scheme" for almost a decade now) and the great mass of teachers will no doubt wait fatalistically to see what, if anything, happens and then do their best to get on with it.

Nevertheless, we are now reaching the crucial stage: the GCE and CSE Boards' Joint Council's Draft National Criteria for English - themselves a product of tortuous negotiation - compromise and redrafting have received the ministerial going-over.

On August 16 Sir Keith Joseph and Nicholas Edwards made public their comments on the criteria. By the "second quarter of 1984", according to the Secretary of State, we will all know whether the 16-plus will go forward.

Reading the ministers' response as a whole, we are struck by the fundamental shift in the balance of influence, regarding the curriculum, they seem to have taken place. They feel quite entitled to make detailed pronouncements on specific issues of English teaching which only a few years ago would have been regarded as inappropriate for a minister. Can you imagine Fred Mulley (or even Margaret Thatcher) for example, publishing worrying about "the range and quality" of the literature candidates would read, or insisting that "carefully chosen unseen passages should be a required element of the examinations



in English", or even questioning the exact form of words in item vii of the description for grade 6?

Clearly, ministers now feel no inhibitions about (literally) laying down the law on such matters even though professionals may continue to agonize. True, the most common verbs associated with the Secretaries of State in their document are "welcome", "agree", "recognise", "suggest" but that "suggest" is followed, if necessary, by a swift imperative.

On the question of objective viii of the Joint Council's English Criteria, for example, the "original document reads that candidates should "exercise care for the conventions of paragraphing, sentence structure, punctuation and spelling in the written form of the language."

Sir Keith is not happy with this. Maybe he scents a touch of wet liberalism creeping in. He "suggests", therefore, that "the criteria statement should expressly require candidates to demonstrate their competence in the use of the structures and vocabulary of standard written and spoken English."

So there!

Indeed, the document has a very

personal flavour to it. Sir Keith's well known concern for the lower end of any ability range is evidenced by a desire that the qualities of a grade 6 candidate "be expressed in more positive terms." (Though, significantly, he makes no comment on the Joint Council's strongly-expressed unease about restricting the top 60 per cent of the ability range.) He likes things to be cut and dried. He is grateful, for instance, to the Joint Council for providing "a much clearer picture than at present of the rationale for examination courses in English Literature."

His logic slices rather neatly through the last section of the Criteria - "English in a Multicultural Society" without demurring from its basic points. All this makes the document interesting to read but we are really ready to accept that Sir Keith (and his successors) are to be the final arbiters on such matters?

Of course the ministers do make much mention of the new Secondary Examinations Council headed by the distinguished Sir Wilfred Cockcroft, but its position and power remain

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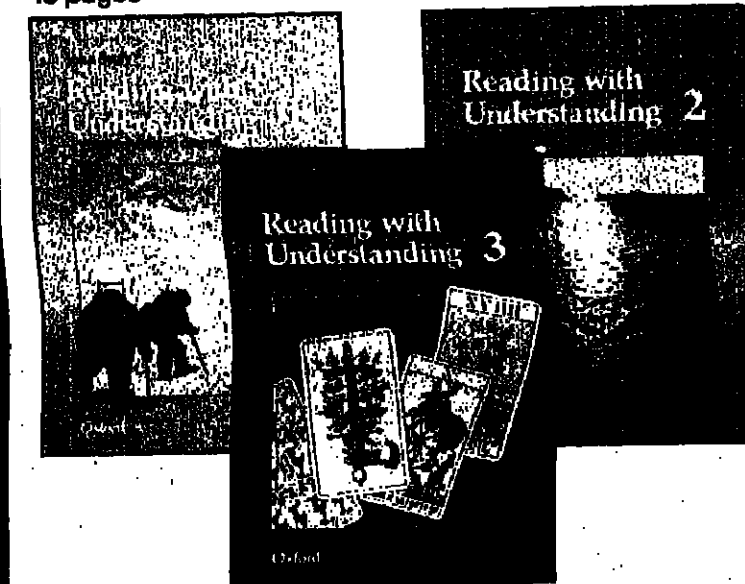
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A foreword by Charles Cripps sets the scene for examining this new spelling material by Philip Bill. The author's approach throughout emphasizes "the importance of presenting in a rational and systematic manner words which look the same irrespective of their sound". In other words, spelling is treated very much as the visual skill research has shown it to be.

The material is intended for use with the word and writing it from memory is

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The exercises are designed to help pupils focus on the detail of words and achieve that important facility for generalization of letter strings - if they know "one" they can write "gone" etc.

The sheets provide a variety of exercises which will challenge and provide enjoyment for pupils. In *Spellmaster 1*, for example, some of the sheets can be transferred on to card in order to play such games as snap. In *Spellmaster 3-6*, for which it is assumed pupils have a knowledge of grapho-phonically ("phonically") regular words, cloze procedure passages are introduced where the deleted words contain the same letter grouping. On such pages additional words are introduced by adding prefixes and suffixes etc. This is well set out and differentiates between those derivatives which do not necessitate a change of spelling for the letter group and those which do (eg stare - stared - staring).

There is an index of words used at each level for teacher reference and it is worth noting that the sheets are not intended to be worked through sequentially but rather as a particular need arises.

My only reservation about *Spellmaster* is that the occasional design problem and the amount on each page means there are times when the absolute minimum of space in which to write is provided for pupils. Otherwise it is a very welcome and, I believe, effective resource for the teaching of spelling.

Wendy Body

Question: Give 16 otherwise intelligent sixth formers the same simple sum to do and how many answers do you get?

The answer may well be 16. The reason: calculators. The effect of the Casio and Texas revolution on students is that they can neither add nor multiply without a spate of button pressing. And unfortunately they often press the wrong ones.

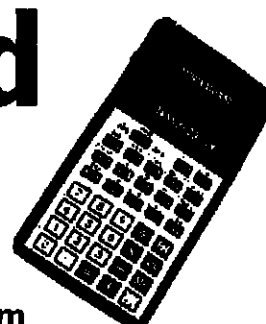
Mental arithmetic always was a scourge to the majority of the population and the advent of calculators has no doubt helped a lot of people. Though it may not matter that the man in the street can no longer remember his tables, it is important that some people can, if only so that somebody will notice when all the computers of the future go wrong.

The fact is that the use of a calculator exacerbates student's grasp of numbers - or lack of it. If 16 students are to divide, say, 60 by 5.5, shall we get a variety of answers, which might begin with any of the digits from 1 to 9. The answer must begin with a 1 (since it lies between 60/5=12 and 60/6=10), but most students refuse to doubt what a calculator tells them even when a little thought would show up the error. "The calculator is always right" is a very pervasive tenet.

Perhaps the most serious problem from the scientists' point of view is the difficulty students have in grasping the importance of "powers of ten". The calculator is a villain here too. If a pupil divides 60 by 5.5 and gets an answer of 1091 it should be obvious that it is wrong. And yet so reliant are

Calculated risk

Philip Bartlett on the effect of calculators in the classroom



some people on calculators that they notice nothing, or perhaps argue as to whether the answer is 1090 or 1091.

The invariant fact is not whether the number after the 9 is 0 or a 1, but that the right answer is ten point something and not one thousand and something.

In much of science an understanding of orders of magnitude and of the need to get an answer approximately right is more important than knowing exactly the right digits. It's not really important to know whether the acceleration due to gravity is 9.81 m/s² or 9.82 m/s² for example, so long as it's 9.8 and not 0.98 or 9,800,000.

Students appear to like exactitude. They hate terms they regard as vague, like "estimate" or "approximate", which are regarded as an invitation to cheat. Yet the ability to approximate is important in the real science of industry, just as it is in the real life of being an adult. From this point of view the BBC's *Great Egg Race* is good education. Not many exact calculations being done here! More like a lot of

competent muddling through, which, if not the mark of all science, is certainly the sign of much good experimenting.

The use of calculators will not teach a student how to approximate, nor will it teach the very important matter of when an approximation is valid and when it isn't. These only come with a lot of mental arithmetic practice, by having to solve them long-hand. In my experience a calculator will show up a student's weaknesses mercilessly, but it will not help put them right.

As calculators become more sophisticated they are enabling people to do things they couldn't do without them. This is likely to create difficulties in education just as, in a wider context, the ease of computing has created difficulties in the real world. Can you view it that calculators should only be used to speed calculations up, not to do things one couldn't do at all without them. This is not unfortunately, what is happening in practice.

William Tyndale School in Canonbury, the company organized a papermaking competition using the kit with some impressive results.

The kit is available, priced £3.50, from Recycled Paper Products, Tolpork, Murreddge, Buckhaven, Fife KY8 1JH.

thousands of pounds, will be sent to local education authorities.

Entries, due in before Christmas, will be judged early in the new year. Winning entries will be displayed at the Science Museum and there will be energy-related trips for the three winning classes.

For information contact Susan Hartley, The Eastwood and Hestair Hope Energy Conservation Project, The Marketing Dept, Hestair Hope Ltd, c/o 434, Corn Exchange Buildings, Hanging Ditch, Manchester M4 3EY.

PAPER KIT



For schools wishing to extend the theme of trees or paper after National Tree Week, Recycled Paper Products, a Scottish company, have brought out a papermaking kit along lines suggested by Anthony Hopkinson in his book "Papermaking at Home". Together with the Canonbury Bookshop in London and the pupils of

centre. The centre houses 16 BBC Micro computer stations all linked up by an Econet system supplied by Acorn Computers. This will also be connected up to Presel which can link them with databanks all over the world.

Built by staff and students after massive fund raising schemes by parents, teachers and pupils at the comprehensive, the centre will serve school needs from computer science to CAL for children with learning difficulties and information retrieval for the library.

SCHOOL'S INTERNATIONAL DATABANK LINK

Aschool computer centre has provided the first international databank link via Prestel.

The international link marked the opening of Garth Hill School's computer

notes

EXTRA

The shape of things to come

continued

ambiguous. On some issues, like standards or correctness in English already alluded to, the minister makes up his mind without reference to the SEC at all; on others his advice is "looked to", most notably on such vexed practical questions as oral assessment and differentiated papers; on a few matters the minister seems willing to be influenced.

He acknowledges, for example, that the Joint Council has "made a strong case for an element of coursework in the assessment of English" which he will concede. "If the SEC share the Joint Council's view," by and large, though, the time of the document places Sir Wilford firmly in the engine room while the minister paces the bridge and steers the course.

The immediate concern for teachers of English, though, is to know in what direction Sir Keith is heading. If he does agree to the 16-plus in principle, and if his views prevail with regard to the aims and content of English, what sort of exam will we end up with?

The first thing to note is that the new exam will be much more centrally and tightly controlled. Sir Keith often stresses the need for examining groups to give "firm", or even, "firmer guidance" on points of detail; he is several times worried by "the risk of extreme variation in practice". A thousand flowers will not be permitted to bloom in Sir Keith's garden and I doubt whether Mode 3 submissions will be encouraged under the new system.

The Joint Council's separation of the subject into "English" and "English Literature" is given ministerial approval. In practice this will mean that the more able candidates will take both examination subjects and the less able "English" only. (What the bottom 40 per cent will do is, of course, anybody's guess.)

On the other hand, nobody will be able to sit an exam in a subject called "English" without, as the ministers put it, showing "evidence of sustained reading of various kinds, including the reading of literary texts." This is to be welcomed. On oral assessment, ministers are clearly still worried about the practicability of devising valid tests, but it is my guess that an acceptable solution will be found and that some form of oral assessment will be a compulsory part of the new 16-plus.

though appearing only as an endorsement on the main certificate. Sir Keith would be well advised to look to the expertise of the existing CSE boards as well as the SEC and the APU; after all they alone have experience of testing candidates in the sort of numbers the new exam will have to deal with.

As to the methods by which candidates' reading, writing, speaking and listening are to be assessed, Sir Keith rightly wants more detail than appears in the Joint Council's rather woolly discussion.

However, he does make a number of significant points. He is (almost) persuaded of the value of coursework and states that both timed written papers and coursework "should be required in all schemes of assessment." This means that wholly continuously assessed schemes would be excluded but at least all candidates would do some coursework under the new arrangements, though moderation will, I think, be tighter than under some CSE boards at present.

All this will involve English teachers in considerable extra work. Interestingly, Sir Keith seems to dislike short answer questions and multiple choice tests and invites the SEC to consider limits on their use as a method of assessing reading comprehension.

Most English teachers, I am sure, would welcome this. No decision is made about the question of differentiated schemes of assessment (that is, different papers, or parts of papers, for candidates of different abilities), but the minister is clearly worried about the stretching the most able.

I suspect—and it's only a guess—that he will eventually be convinced that undifferentiated schemes (that is, the same paper for all) should go ahead. Whatever happens on this point Sir Keith is firm that "the use of carefully chosen unseen passages be a required element of examinations."

On the literature side the strongest points to emerge are: clear support for a minimum of 25 per cent of total marks to be allocated for evidence of wider reading than set texts, though examining groups should offer "clear guidance" on the range and quality of such reading; unseen material to be prescribed element in all English Literature syllabuses; coursework to be allowed (with SEC approval) to form a required part, with timed examination, of all schemes of assessment.

The ministers come out more strongly in favour of differentiated papers in "Literature" than in "English". They suggest "that the needs of

all the candidates in the target group could be met either by alternative papers or by grade-related alternative sections within a common paper."

I feel this is a shame, but it no doubt arises from a ministerial desire to guard "the classics", particularly Shakespeare, from dilution.

So much for the thoughts of ministers. The onus is now on the Secondary Examinations Council to get down to brass tacks with the Joint Council of the CSE and GCE boards. Over the next few months the issues will be discussed behind (half) closed doors, with Sir Keith hovering in the wings ready to make "the Grand Decision" in the spring.

What is the average classroom teacher to make of it all? Well, already I detect a note of cautious apathy growing within the profession. Teachers of English will no doubt master the new system as they did the old in what they hope are the interests of their students. No doubt there will be irritations and restrictions under any new scheme, but soon, whatever happens, the fanfares will fade, the controversies die down and the real task (of teaching) will continue.

Bill Deller is English adviser for Waltham Forest.

On shifting ground

Gordon Mason considers the study of literature

How much what goes on in schools, is done as "subject"? Simply because they are there? How much of what appears on the curriculum connects in any real sense with a child's life? Sometimes neither the teacher nor the taught "meet" in any active sense in the work they are doing together. What does go on is by some kind of agreement by both parties. We have to do this, so let's get on with it.

There are so many legacies in education, so many assumptions about it, inherited from the past, it is really rather surprising that the "Victorians" reasons for doing things in certain ways are still our reasons for doing them. Nor does it surprise me that the ideology which underpinned grammar schools is still the ideology which underpins many comprehensive schools.

For instance, it simply shouldn't be good enough to say that because we are a Church State, that is why children should study RE. We are in truth a multi-religious society comprising Hindus, Muslims, Parses, Christians

and Jews. There are also many children (and parents) who are none of these. Moreover, many youngsters will tell you they would prefer to be studying comparative religions instead of grinding away at the Old and New Testaments.

Behind the mix-up is either deliberate prejudice, or a genuine lack of understanding of what the purpose of education is; whether it is an attempt to understand what we find around us—what we actually find—or what, as teachers, we believe children should find. That brand of paternalism is part of the Victorian legacy too. No doubt it is done in good faith.

So, when it comes to literature, it is fascinating to speculate why teachers believe it is worth doing. What do they think it is for? To say "enjoyment" is a good short-hand way of saying that it is certainly true—that it is enjoyable—but it does rather duck question.

For my own part I believe literature has a function. Or more precisely, literature functions. The world is a pretty mysterious place, full of contra-



dictions and paradoxes. And, from my own experience, it doesn't get any less mysterious as we grow up. Conflict, and the resolution of conflict seem somehow to be at the heart of it. Works of literature are attempts to create some order out of that conflict; to make the incomprehensible com-

prehensible.

There are some assumptions you can make about literature; that a writer loves humanity for instance. That would be the point of trying to understand it and speak to it if he didn't. And his assumption in turn is "the fallacy of normality". There is a fundamental uniqueness about every soul on the planet, he will tell you, through his work. His job is conveying that, whether he is writing a novel or a play. The poet for his part offers you the uniqueness of vision itself. Poetry is the assertion of the uniqueness of every one of us. And the poet's struggle for his own voice is a metaphor for all our struggles to assert the seeping/feeling self.

The most important assumption that any English teacher can make, is that the child who comes to a book is not in any real sense "known" to the teacher. None of us really knows the narrative that has gone on, and is going on inside anyone else. We may know facts (whatever they are), events, data about the person—this child is one of two in a one-parent family for instance. But that doesn't really tell you a great deal; not what he feels like in that situation—even if you yourself are one of two children in a one-parent family. Only he can tell. If he chooses to. And if he can find the words, the right words.

If my instinct is right we can tell even less what any child takes away from a book we have shared, let alone what he brings to it. I know what he has written in his essay on Lear, but that was in response to the questions to which I decided he should address himself. No, I mean the examiner decided the student should address himself. And they aren't necessarily the same as the child might ask. Never was there a system so perfectly designed to obscure that unique response as the examination system.

A book affects people in entirely unique ways. It "goes into" our lives, as much as we do into it. And those who read it bring a narrative bigger even than the novel itself. What comes out of the book at us is nothing less than the paradox—a character's similarity and difference to us. But then art

is paradox. And behind that a further mystery—neither the writer himself nor the teacher can predict which parts, or emphases will be those each reader will take away—because the reader's own narrative will dictate that.

Experiencing literature is about shifting ground, shifting your perspective, both to the book and of your own life-experience. Sharing your responses is shifting your ground again, against the ground others hold. It is about accommodating views of the work and the world which are not your own.

The process of illumination which went on as you were reading the book is heightened again by someone else's experience of their reading. Much clearly depends on the spirit in which all of this is undertaken. If, as is obvious, the teacher does have a rôle in handling these shifts of ground, then he must balance his own reading of the book with everything he does not know about the child. There is a very obvious risk—even at temptation—that the teacher's book/life experience will dominate the process, unless the teacher, in his special rôle, sets out to ensure that doesn't happen. After all, what is at stake here is not just some lifeless interpretation of a text—or it shouldn't be. That isn't what an author intends. It is about how a child, after reading a book, "sees" say, betrayal. How he can come to terms with it. Literature is that intravenous.

The sensibility of a teacher who is handling a book, particularly his sensitivity to his children's views will take what the child remembers and takes away from the process—not the particular interpretation the teacher gave when they were "doing a set-text". What happens during the study of literature (as that contentious phrase has it) is no less than the study of our life and our view of it. Books literally come alive only in the reading. And they come alive in a different way for each of us.

Gordon Mason is County Inspector for English, Somerset.

EXTRA



Only a minority of teachers are likely to come into contact with current speculation and experiments via in-service courses

Keeping on course

How might curriculum theory get into teaching practice without getting lost on the way? Roger Knight points the direction

The work of Barnes, Britton, Rosen and Todd has had little effect on practical pedagogy. The department that puts into practice mixed ability teaching, small group work, post-Chomsky grammar and turns its back on the class textbook and the class novel seems still to be the exception.

(D. Curtis, "Return to College", TES, April 29, 1983)

The first priority is to educate the teacher in an understanding of the nature of language and its part in human development; and of the nature, significance and operation of literature, and of allied media such as drama, in the larger context of language.

(Bullock Revisited, DES 1982)

Anyone who has been through an initial teacher-training course in the last dozen years or so can hardly have escaped some degree of contact with the linguistic triumvirate of Barnes, Britton and Rosen. Probably they will hang together in most people's minds as the authors of perhaps the most influential, certainly the best-known of language books, *Language, the Learner and the School* (1969).

But to fall into the easy habit of attributing such widespread influence to the book is to beg the question raised in D. Curtis's statement. For indeed it is difficult to disagree with him. And the "easy habit" is indicative of how easy it is to confuse the familiarity of those names with the extent to which their work and the insights associated with them have penetrated where it matters, that is the ordinary secondary classroom.

The extent of their failure to achieve such penetration is indicated in the sentence quoted from HMI's *Bullock Revisited* (1982). (The inspectors are considering the in-service education of the non-specialist teacher of English.) It is on the face of it astonishing that 13 years after the publication of *Language, the Learner and the School* and seven years after *Bullock*, they should feel the need to define "the first priority" in those words. Should we not by this time be able to take it as understood?

We as surely should as we evidently cannot. Why? In seeking to answer that question we have to ask another: by what route does curriculum theory find its way into everyday practice in English education and what are the obstacles it typically has to overcome?

It would be tempting but glib to see inertia as the principal obstacle; we are all too busy to do anything but react to the demands of the moment. But that serious engagement with what is going on in the classroom is not in general taken up. I suspect that the limited impact of such

question) the characteristic circumstances within which such ideas have to make their way are consistently hostile to their taking effect. What are these circumstances?

Bullock Revisited reports some reduction in the number of teachers of English possessing no "discernible qualifications" for teaching the subject, but it still stands at 22 per cent of the total. Consider in the light of that figure the notoriously divergent notions of what "English" actually is that one can discern in the schools, notions reflected in the bewildering diversity of course-books and materials currently in use, and you begin to see the character of this diversity is too often the ossification of discredited practice: how do you begin as a teacher to consider and assimilate what Barnes, Britton and Rosen have to say about language and learning if English for you is grammar, comprehension, spelling and the reader round the class?

It is no exaggeration to say that whole generations of students may pass through the hands of an English department without ever being touched by what is most positive and intelligent in the teaching of the subject. It is, for instance, too much a fact that, whether they derive their idea of English from a department energized by the excellent *Oxford Secondary English* (1982) or, conversely, sunk in the timelessly awful *English Today* of Ronald Ridout.

Oxford Secondary English is indeed an outstanding venture for it demonstrates what is arguably the only route along which we can expect curriculum theory to impinge upon general practice. Anyone who ponders the work of the Schools Council cannot fail to be impressed by the excellence of some of its projects and, conversely, the limited impact they have had on educational practice.

The clue to that limited impact in the field of English is the situation I have just described. Moreover, however earnest the endeavours at dissemination there are formidable difficulties facing even the liveliest classroom teachers who might wish to integrate the available insights who is able and it is a rare teacher who is able and willing to incorporate fresh and possibly disturbing thinking into his or her routine, stamina and motivation are too great.

The history of curriculum development in the past 20 years has made it abundantly clear that the implicit invitation to "let a stream of fresh thought play freely about stock notions" is not in general taken up. I suspect that the limited impact of such

projects as *Language in Use*, the *Development of Writing Abilities* and the *16-19 Project* is not in the least due to any inherent deficiencies in their ideas, their "fresh thought". It is due, rather, to those ideas not having been successfully mediated for the majority of teachers of English in schools and colleges. (Early on it was recognized that such mediation was necessary with *Language in Use* and a series of materials for direct use in the classroom followed.)

Such mediation, I would venture, has to be through channels felt to be safe and familiar. I mean the course-book. It is all very well for *Bullock Revisited*, pondering the nature of the provision it sees necessary for the non-specialist English teacher, to say that "i.e.a.s and other providers of in-service training should be aware that training in methodology or the mere provision of resources will not suffice". (The priority being that quoted at the head of this article.)

No one will quarrel with the contention that we all need a confident grasp of the principles and assumptions underlying our practice. But is it not the case that, for the majority of non-specialist teachers particularly, such a grasp is more likely to develop *a posteriori*, that for instance through using intelligently conceived teaching packages? We might in time appreciate the soundness of the principles on which they are based?

Now course-books have usually had a bad press from those whose business it is to advise English teachers; and not without reason. But, like it or not, they are staple in most English schools. (The idea of the English teacher as a deeply cultured individual, constantly sensitive to the most positive intellectual currents, sensitive to their bearings on his practice, endlessly able to improvise lessons with the light of those glances connexion with the reality of teaching in most classrooms.) And an intolerance of course-books per se is unproductive; indeed, worse, since to turn away in distaste from the kind of material that is "English" for very great numbers of children and their teachers is only to give strength to those who wish to add to it.

I sometimes have a vision of books with titles like *Structured Comprehension*, *Still More Grammar*, *Now Write* and their unlimited progeny stretching confidently and fruitlessly to the crack of doom. Publishers know and can hardly be blamed for exploiting the apparently insatiable appetite for more of the same. But the initiative for publishers who can see that much of what is printed is intellectually light and practically worthless is with them.

there for the seizing. *Oxford Secondary English* is an outstanding response to such an initiative. It is indeed a course book, but with what a difference! The authors have mediated much of the best theory we have at our disposal, have made it real and usable. The material chosen and the work suggested reflect an intelligent and intelligible grasp of many of the formative ideas to be located within the traditions of English teaching.

These ideas are seen in both positive and negative lights. For instance, positively the authors accept the primacy of the imaginative uses of language in any claim for English to be considered an independent curriculum area. So there is a thoroughgoing emphasis on creating the conditions under which imaginative writing may both be studied and engaged in: the reading of good literature on the one hand and "personal" writing on the other.

The suggestions for oral work (not conceived as a separate element but arising from and leading to other kinds of English work) endorse the value of exploratory talk, especially in small groups, just as they advocate the necessarily connected value of improvised drama. It is here that the influence of Barnes, Britton and Rosen is at most productively to be found: at a point where the necessarily analytical, discursive accounts of research are translated into readily intelligible practice.

What distinguishes the *Oxford* course from the run of the mill, what makes it indeed exemplary, is the pressure of real thought palpably bearing upon its contents; thought that declares itself in what has been left out as much as in the practice the authors endorse. They will, for instance, have no truck with the kind of comprehension routines that still represent some of how to teach reading—and still, day in day out, distort a great deal of English teaching in this country. Implicitly they reject the teaching of gram-

mar except in the most skeletal form, for purposes of easy reference. (Following, it should be said, the advice of all those who have studied the matter during the best part of the last 100 years.)

I suspect that while morally immaculate, the inspectors' recommendations in *Bullock Revisited* (their "first priority") will be of limited value. In-service education is indeed vital. But it is still only a minority of teachers who are likely to come into contact with current speculation and experiment via in-service courses.

For the vast majority, guidance in practice is likely to remain synonymous with the available course-books. The department puts at their disposal. In the circumstances, the "understanding of the nature of language" and of "the nature, significance and operation of literature" that the inspectors stress is on the whole most likely to be generated through the use of published materials already penetrated by the understanding that the inspectors require. The *Oxford* course shows us the way.

The unity of understanding and practice that may clude many an English department at present (one thinks again of the non-specialist teachers) may not be brought about by putting the *Oxford* course into the hands of all its members; such a move would nevertheless be in the right direction. For while it would not guarantee good teaching it would guarantee current within the school what its authors have made available in their books: intelligent practice that has assimilated and reflects the best ideas.

NOTE: *Oxford Secondary English* (three pupil's books and three teacher's books) is the work of John Seeley, assisted by Frank Ash, Frank Green and Chris Woodhead.

Roger Knight is editor of the *Use of English and Senior Lecturer in Education in the University of Leicester*.

NATE

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Comprehensive Milton

James Sale sets a school production in a wider context

"How many of the world class authors of our English literary culture would British 12 to 15-year-olds today be able to name?" This provocative question, posed by Linda Hall (TES April 29) divides contemporary educators in a deeper sense than is readily apparent. Superficially, there are two obvious responses: English teaching is not about a "cognitive approach... at a simple, factual level," but about response... to the text, and therefore acquaintance with our "cultural heritage" is at best irrelevant at worst pernicious; or yes, why isn't "Shakespeare, Dickens, Milton and Chaucer" taught in first years, even if at a level avoiding close engagement with the text?

The former response currently holds sway; however, this practical criticism approach is itself under fire in terms of method and content. As Linda Hall notes, classic authors tend to be A level texts, whereas O and CSE courses can too easily avoid the classics, and opt for "contemporary" realist works of ephemeral interest.

And there's the rub: "ephemeral interest". Surely, the cry goes out, these works are the very ones which are relevant, realistic, and which relate to the "kids". And aren't there warnings enough of the harm caused by traditional English teaching's attempts to spoonfeed our "culture", our "heritage", our "tradition"?

True, the warnings are there, but certain straws in the wind suggest a storm may soon be blowing another way.

First, the increasing recognition by teachers and writers that wholeness of response is not something that practical criticism necessarily attains. Some have said it's "... entirely unsuitable as an approach to poetry for the great majority"; others advocate the need "to put on offer as wide and as varied a selection as possible".

Second, and more importantly, the equation of "contemporary" realism equals "ephemeral interest" is evidently and disturbingly seems true. That prophetic voice, Kathleen Raine, becomes the "art of imitation... not the product of imaginative inspiration but of human personality, uninspired." Further she states: "To recreate a common language for the communication of knowledge of spiritual realities, and of the invisible order of the psyche, is the problem now for any serious artist or poet, as it should be for educators." What could be further from "contemporary" realism? Heronus falls on artist and - significantly - educator.

It is here that the "deeper sense" invades the discussion, because the choice between the two approaches becomes not academic, but personal - ultimate beliefs are engaged. Raine's description, "uninspired", is a euphemism; Hall puts it more directly: "... so much contemporary writing... purveys a sense of hopelessness and impotence in the face of life's forces."

And, thus, it becomes the redeeming merit of the classics that "they reveal to us that tremendous capacity of human beings for rising above poverty, disease and unhappiness to create... works of lasting beauty and significance." But beauty and significance are not concepts readily associated with the twentieth century mind; the attempted disembodiment of Milton's *Paradise Lost* in the 1930's is, perhaps, an example of the modern desire to resist literature of hope and potency.

Theoretical considerations aside, teachers may well cite the Bullock Report to defend their right not to teach Milton - even at A level, never mind fourth or fifth-year groups: "At A level Milton's poetry, and particularly *Paradise Lost*, was notably unpopular." Here then, surely, is an opportunity to re-evaluate our approach.

urban comprehensive with a varied catchment area. The school is fortunate in having a dynamic Head of English, Lance Hattatt; the county is fortunate in having supportive English and drama advisers, Gordon Ward and Peter Williams. Teaching Shakespeare to 12-year-olds is now an integral and highly successful component of second-year coursework.

Higher up the school the commitment to the classics continues; this year



"They hand in hand, with wand'ring steps and slow, Through Eden took their solitary way"

a large number of fourth and fifth-years have voluntarily opted to spend some three to four hours per week of their time studying Milton. How has this come about?



John Milton, poet

The Hampton Park Poetry Festival on November 16 and 17 was a major event in the school's life. An attempt to demonstrate just what a small English department in a small comprehensive could achieve: a vivid and vital concern with poetry - its home produce and the fruit of other schools; speakers of distinction - Michael Benton, David Orme, Brian Coffey, Christopher Salvesen, and Kevin Crossley-Holland - to provide ideas and inspiration, and to reinforce the sense of poetry, our contemporary; and lastly, poetry - our heritage - *Paradise Lost*. Originally Milton conceived *Paradise Lost* as a play, *Adam Unparadized*, and others have not been slow to realize its dramatic possibilities; notably Dryden, *The State of Innocence*, and the Fall of Man, 1674. Peter Williams, however, altered *Paradise Lost*: converting blank verse into heroic couplets, concentrating solely on the scenes involving mankind. Today, despite felicitous, Dryden's play seems dry - perhaps inevitably, since one cannot help but remember (at any

given moment) Milton's own rendition.

It was, therefore, decided to attempt a play from the poem, and one that attempted to perform what Dryden did not: to maintain, as far as possible, the scope of the epic, and to preserve, at all costs, the inspired language. The result has been twofold.

First, about 20 pupils from the school slavishly tackled their demanding parts over a six month period. Before even considering stage-work, the producer has the problem of pupil comprehension. But this needn't frighten, or prove deadly dull. On the contrary, comprehension can become joyous when considering these "mystery" - one might almost say, pantomimic - characters: "death", "sin", "Satan", "Gabriel", "Eve". In colloquial terms, fascinating, incredible and fascinating incredibility certainly spurs understanding.

Without a shadow of doubt - dramatic realization aside - the simple fact of pupils facing Milton, phrasing Milton, thinking Milton, fighting Milton; in short, of pupils confronted by Milton in the guise of all these extravagant, preposterous, and yet oh-so-real characters is of enormous educational and imaginative significance.

Milton is alive and well (having escaped his fatal sentence on the syllabus block) and temporarily abiding at Hampton Park Poetry Festival: as Christ (Jason Davies), the Devil (Kate Brown), Eve (Sarah Mitchell), or Adam (Thomas Armstrong), or any other refugee in the vast panorama.

Secondly, have-project-will-travel: one hopes other schools might like to attempt this enterprise. Fortunately, the text of the play - which runs approximately 145 hours - has been published by the KOBX Press, 41 Jolliffe Road, Poole, Dorset, Bournemouth, BH15 1JF. Those who do engage upon the stage adaptation will - like those at Hampton Park - be able to make a positive response to Linda Hall's provocative question.

James Sale teaches English and drama at Hampton Park School Publications include: *Carnal Spirits*, poems.

EXTRA

The workshop approach

By David Orme

bomb, pollution, sex, school lunches.

Some of us were about as successful at making them think as we had been at making them create, but other teachers managed, and went on to appear in Open University programmes to explain how they did so.

Discussion periods were now an important part of the English syllabus, and not just a useful time-filler that produced no marking.

Once again, literature was a "resource". The trick was to start a lesson with a relevant story or poem, then forget it quickly and move on to discuss the "topic" contained in it. Never mind if this solid literature short - never mind, very often, if the literature wasn't worth reading in the first place.

Thus the sense of dissatisfaction, and the need for a new approach that would give literature the treatment it deserved, and would teach verbal skills to a high level of competence without too much resort to the grammar book and dreary exercise. I also did not want to lose the sense of fun and involvement that were the real pleasures of the approaches that I had rejected.

In formulating what I have called the "workshop approach", I had five broad aims in view, and - I hoped - workable strategies for carrying them out. Encouraged by some recent trends, notably the number of schools now running writers' workshops as out-of-class activities, and the publication of Peter Abbs's book *English within the Arts* I launched the new approach early this year.

My first aim was to create writing situations that were nearer those employed by "real" writers. I don't suppose many professional writers would be enthusiastic about the prospect of

producing a correct, complete essay within an hour of being given the subject, or a poem in the half hour before lunch.

A "real" writing situation could consist of such activities as musing, scribbling down a few thoughts, having a cup of coffee, trying a first draft, showing it to a friend, having another go, putting it in a drawer for a week... obviously, not all of this is possible in the classroom, but emphasis could be placed on planning, making notes, writing drafts, and class or teacher/pupil discussion of the drafts.

In other words we are trying to convince our pupils that writing is something worth working at. There are dangers of overpolishing, but these can be overstated. The most useful tool for doing the drafting work is the word processor, which we have yet to acquire. There is a great future for these machines in the teaching of English as they take all the slog out of manipulating text.

The second aim was a determination to abandon the notion of artificial "stimulus" (perhaps we could slip it into the school lunch instead?) in favour of writing based as much as possible on observation and real experience.

In the good old days of free expression an account of a brown cow eating green grass was dull, but a blue cow eating pink grass was "imaginative". This view confuses imagination with fantasizing; the imaginative process is far more difficult to define. At least the first account showed that the child had opened its eyes. Getting children to write well is often a matter of just this, opening their eyes, making them use

all their senses to perceive the world around them. Without this, descriptive writing is as stereotyped as the lollipop trees in the young child's painting. Real happenings, places and people make for far more interesting writing than fantasy bank raids or trips to the moon. This does not mean that fiction should be outlawed in English lessons. Rather, we should encourage young writers to use these real people, places and situations in their fiction.

My third anxiety was the situation where no one but the teacher sees the work. Is a tick, or an encouraging comment enough, considering the work involved on the part of the pupil? "A+" or "19 out of 20" would at least offer some sense of satisfaction, even if it was a false one. Again, I considered the professional writer. Obviously he would expect payment for his work, but this might prove difficult in schools.

The other thing he expects is an audience. I felt that it was important to find new ways of presenting work to a wider audience than the teacher or the writer's classmates. Possibilities were publishing (school newspapers, magazines, anthologies, pamphlets of individual pupil's work, posters, displays, broadsheets, letters to newspapers) readings, (poetry festivals, production of pupils' own plays, dramatic presentations of various kinds, making tapes and videos, and appearing on local radio) and the keeping of individual portfolios of work.

A great deal of pleasure and profit can be obtained from these things, particularly if pupils are involved in the technical side of production - by learning to type, for example, pasting up a magazine, or being involved in

sales and distribution. We have set up a school publishing "cooperative" and have published not only the work of pupils but staff as well.

My fourth point was concerned with the teaching of literature. There are two good reasons for doing this; first for the pleasure and profit that comes from doing so, and second as examples of what our pupils, as young writers, are trying to do. Metaphor and simile, assonance and alliteration, paragraphing and arrangement of material are surely best taught by reference to good examples. Therefore we need to shift attention from the subject matter of literature to a close look at how the writer is presenting that subject matter in an effective way, the hope being that our pupils may learn to present what they want to say equally effectively. We are appreciating good writing because it is good, not just because it is "about" a topic we wish to present.

The final point is concerned with writing skills. It is assumed by publishers that any writer submitting material will have mastered the rules of grammar and syntax, spelling and punctuation. This is a false hope on occasions. There has been an assumption in some quarters that these skills can be acquired without being taught. Some children do have an ear for language, but others do need the back-up of regular skills sessions, and if it involves them in some chores, so be it. Any craft, whether it be making furniture or writing stories and poems, requires skill acquired by hard graft.

These five points were to be the ground rules for my teaching. So far, the results have been encouraging, although there are problems in running an English workshop, not least explaining the levels of noise and physical activity that takes place in what was once a quiet and studious classroom - duplicators being turned, typewriters clattering and editorial committees in session!

David Orme is head of English at Twyford School, Winchester and Director of the Schools' Poetry Association.

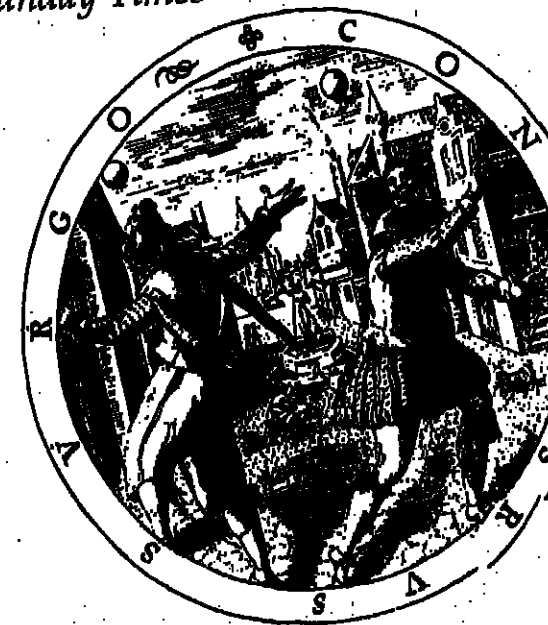
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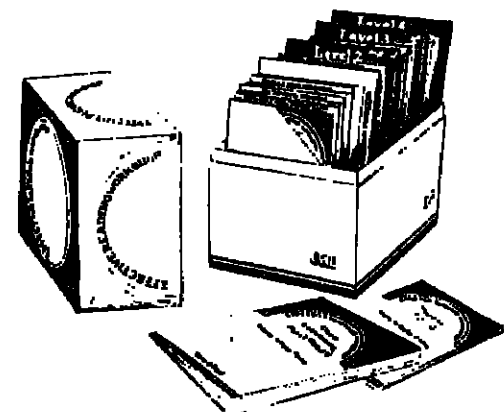
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A call for support

Interrupted lessons are only one of the complex factors that make
English an exercise in teaching skills.

By Sue Horner



Planning the English slot in the second-
ary school curriculum is a complex
task. The Secondary Committee of the
National Association for the Teaching
of English, together with Schools
Council Programme Two, studied diaries
kept by English teachers of
approximately half a term's work with
a particular class.

These diaries included an account of
the teachers' aims, and all of them
hoped to contribute to the central aim
of education - the personal develop-
ment of the whole individual into
intelligent and sympathetic partici-
pants in society.

In English this central aim seems to
have three constituent elements which
are its distinctive contribution. These
are:

Linguistic Development, encouraging
pupils to develop discrimination in
the uses of language for many pur-
poses, both their own and those of
powerful others in the media, politics
and other public arenas;

Aesthetic Development, developing
imaginative participation in the world
of literature, encouraging perception
of character and a critical understand-
ing of the values and worth of a writer;

Social and Moral Development,
looking at issues within the school
society as well as their wider context,
and encouraging cooperative, positive
relationships (See diagram of model
below).

Teachers of English are faced with
the problem of how to transform these
large scale aims into viable lessons,
ensuring intention is transferred to
practice. The relationship between
aims and lessons is a complex one and
not one that can be simplified - there is
no way of ensuring that a particular
activity will bring about a particular
advancement on the part of the pupil.

The skills cannot be isolated and
separately inculcated - for example,
the development of linguistic compe-
tence in a variety of situations cannot
be divorced from a social awareness,
and it is quite likely that the aims will
be approached through a literary stim-
ulus, thus embracing all three major
areas in one activity.

This complexity must be retained.
The attempt to identify more precisely
when measurable progress has been
made has led to some very reductionist
versions of English, as exemplified in
the worst type of course books where
points of linguistic competence are
isolated and "practised" on the
assumption that the pupil will then
write more correctly.

It has been encouraging to see that
the criteria for 16-plus examinations
have avoided this trap of overparticu-
larity, but there may be cause for
concern in the move towards Pro-
ficiency tests and possibly Graded
Tests, which may be based on inade-
quate models of linguistic development.
Most teachers in the study avoided
this over-simplification, well aware
that involvement in a story or an issue
leads to new uses of language and new
awareness of moral dilemmas. English
may seem to have less concrete content
but this presents the challenge - to find
materials and activities which will
engage pupils' interest, the pre-re-
quisite to real progress in the literary,
linguistic and social areas.

A corollary of this is the difficulty of
identifying success, and this leads to
diffidence in teachers. Even experi-
enced teachers could not guarantee
success and this is not through their
lack of clarity or competence but
because they are aware that classes
vary so much and what works with one
may fail with another.

There is no reliable, identified se-
quential development for pupils in
English. Guidelines are useful, but in
complex areas, such as creative writing
the pupil, the teacher and their rela-
tionship are crucial to individual de-
velopment.

This is reflected in another finding of
the study: that while broad aims were
agreed this was not reflected in a
common approach in the classroom.
The teachers in the study were gener-
ally experienced and dedicated and had
already worked out a fairly clear vision
of appropriate materials and methods.

However these were mainly expressed
as short term goals - "to do some
discussion before they write" or "to
read a play together in class".

Behind these specific lesson plans
were notions of balance, introducing
new ideas, linguistic development and
examination success and ensuring
pupils were challenged. The teachers
did not explicitly link these notions to
their broad aims, and it is recom-
mended that departments discuss
these aims and exactly how they pro-
pose to fulfil them, or else teachers are
open to charges of the lack of a
properly worked out framework for
their lessons.

The teachers in the study were
obviously fascinated by their pupils
and any agreed ideas of appropriate
skills, content and methodology must
be fitted to particular classes, rather
than trying to force groups through an
inflexible programme.

The judgment of the teacher is
crucial here and this independence is
both a strength and a pitfall. There
must be a creative tension between the
autonomy of the teacher and the
expectations of department and
school.

What teachers of English in the
study recognised as valuable and
necessary flexibility was seen by some
as chaos and a lack of planning.
Teachers of English must be clear
about the framework for particular
lessons and be assured that there is a
planned programme rather than a
series of happy accidents. The teachers
in the study were certainly able to
reflect on their practice and used their
freedom to choose materials to good
effect, what they need is recognition
and support in their particularly com-
plex part of the curriculum, not an
assumption that "anybody can teach
English", and the accompanying frag-
mentation of practice.

The balance between ideals and
what is realistically possible in any
particular classroom is a delicate one
and many of our teachers devote
exceptional time and energy to max-
imising opportunities.

This ingenuity and realism is also

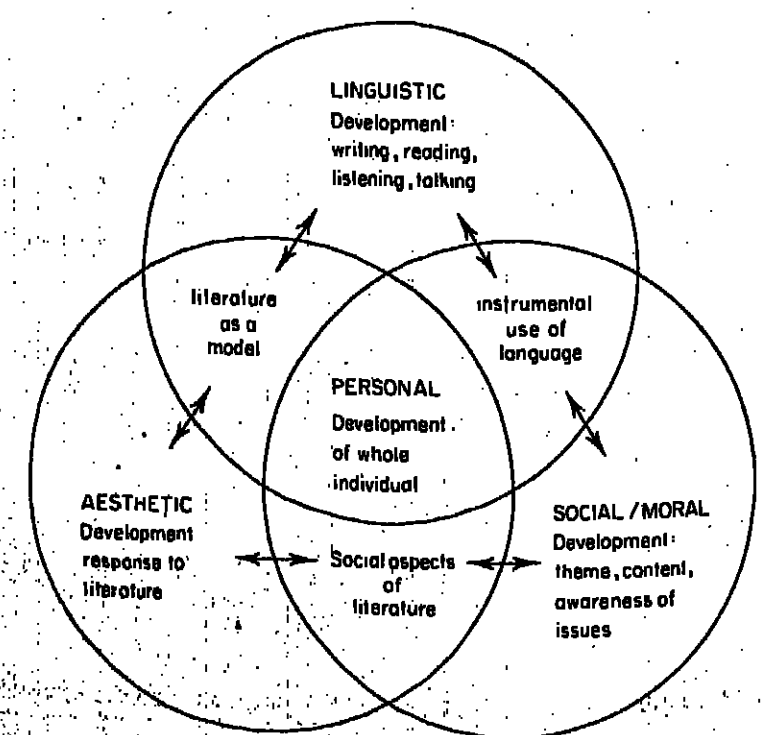
essential in view of the large number of
factors over which the teacher has very
little control. The number of interrup-
tions to lessons revealed in the study
was surprisingly large, varying from
dental inspections and absence to
whistling painters and locked clas-
srooms. Indeed there seemed to be
scarcely a week when lessons pro-
ceeded exactly as the timetable envis-
aged.

Some of the events were planned
and highly desirable, such as educa-
tional trips, sports days, hobbies com-
petitions and even examinations. In
these cases the relationship of these
events to the general curriculum
should be made explicit and an overall
look at how best to allocate time to the
numerous demands may result in
radical changes of practice. In any
case, it must be borne in mind that if
interruptions are too frequent then the
teacher's relationship with a class is
threatened and the likelihood of pro-
ductive lessons is reduced.

It must be recognised that the most
fully planned English programme will
founder on inadequate resources. The
physical conditions of school sites, and
the standard of resourcing in the
traditionally "cheap" (in capitation per
pupil contact time) subject of English
must affect not only what the teacher
can contemplate doing, but also
morale and relationships in the
classroom.

This study is not asking for special
treatment for English teachers, but for
a more full and clear understanding of
the complexities of an area of the
curriculum which is too frequently
taken for granted. This understanding
might then lead to more sensitive
provision for the teacher both within
the school and its allocation of re-
sources, and by those concerned with
the effectiveness of teachers in their
employment or undergoing training.

*Best laid plans: English teachers at
work.* Edited by Sue Horner. A report
from the Secondary Committee of
NAPE. Published for the Schools
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Drummer Hodge unseen

Raymond O'Malley on schools, poetry and the Falklands

Walter Arnold rated highly the
creative power of poetry. He would,
I suspect, be perturbed by the ducks
in poetry in some schools
(yes). That suspicion is prompted by
an experience as moderator to one of
the 10 examinations in literature.

In this particular paper, an antholo-
gy of prescribed. Assessment is
by way of an "unseen" poem,
encouraging wider reading and
ability to avoid rehearsed answers.
The unseen poem set was Hardy's
"Drummer Hodge". In the rubric a
brief was given on the alien words
and the general background. Candi-
dates were asked to say, after reading
the poem a number of times, what the
poem meant to them.

By chance, between the setting of
the question and the writing of the
exam, there occurred the Falklands
crisis, in which a number of Argentine
warships met a fate sadly like
that of Hodge. The effect on the
exam was startling. Many candi-
dates left free to give a substantial
account of their space to the Falklands
rather than to Hardy's thoughts, his
tragic, his words or even the boy
drummer. In one extreme case a
candidate, after some loose references
to the poem in the opening part of her
exam, made no further reference to
the poem in the remaining 60 per cent
of the answer.

Here is the poem:
They throw in Drummer Hodge, to
rest

Unloved - just as found:
His landmark is a kopie-crest
That breaks the veldt around:
And foreign constellations west
Each night about his mound.

Young Hodge the Drummer never
knew -
Fresh from his Wessex home -
The meaning of the broad Karoo.
The Bush, the dusty loam,
And why uprose to nightly view
Strange stars amid the gloom.
Yet portion of that unknown plain
Will Hodge for ever be;
His lonely Northern breast and brain
Grow up some Southern tree,
And strange-eyed constellations reign
His stars eternally.

This is for me a very moving poem,
but of course I do not expect a
candidate to agree. Response to a
poem is intensely personal - the better
the poem the more of a given reader's
personality will be drawn into the
response. Inevitably therefore re-
sponse and interpretation will differ
from reader to reader. If however the
examiner are competent the variations
will not be erratic: it will be visible the
same poem that is being responded to.
Especially is that so in an examination,
in which the candidate's aim perforce
will reveal the degree of poetic
sensitivity that has been developed
under tuition.

Before giving much space (say) to
Falklands victims a candidate must
necessarily ask himself some simple
questions about the poem, and con-
sider the examiner that he has done so.
For instance, why the name "Hodge"
and its occurrence in every stanza?
Could it equally have been "Smith", or
"Thompson"? Why is the unceremo-
nious burial so heavily emphasized -
what point can Hardy be making? Why
the mention of a South African hill-top
in the landscape near his grave - was it
a thing for a Wessex boy? What kind of
"meaning" can a landscape have, whether in
Africa or in Wessex? Is it significant
that the first verse is wholly in the
present ("throw"), the second in the
past ("knew"), and the third in the
future ("will Hodge for ever be") -
and the word "yet" giving guidance to
Hardy's meaning?

All these are points that will quickly
catch the attention of anyone asking
what the poem says. But at an early
stage it will become evident that three
larger issues appear (as does the name
"Hodge") in every stanza. First, star-
constellations "again", "stars",
and what is more the constellations
become "strange-eyed" who
"stare" at the boy, important to Hodge?
The poem's pervasive reference to the

unaccustomed - "foreign", "strange",
"unknown"; "Southern" as against
"Northern"; and, in contrast, "home"
and "homely". And thirdly there is
"each night", "nightly", "for ever",
"eternally" - the notion of repetition
through eternity.

And one critical question of a differ-
ent kind can hardly fail to present
itself to an attentive reader. In the
complete poem there is not one word
of explicit sympathy for the unfortu-
nate drummer; what are we to make of
that?

These are only some of the questions
waiting there to be asked. If I have
over-laboured the point, it is to make
my case clear: a candidate who shoots
off at a tangent, without, somehow,
having indicated to the examiner that
questions like these are clearly in his
mind, cannot claim credit for talking
about the poem. No candidate will
want to ask all the questions; for one
thing, there might not then be enough
time remaining to examine the deeper,
divergent interpretations that may

grow out of this beginning; and, for
another, good candidates have their
own ways of indicating sharpness of
focus. But there is no by-passing the
need to look at the poem, look at the
poet's words, notice just what he says.

At this earlier stage, of seeing what
the poet says, an interpretation can be
wrong, plain wrong. I have heard
teachers - and examiners - seem to
shudder at the assertion, but to deny it
is to reduce poetry to a mush. For
instance, the primary point about
"some Southern tree" is that for
Hodge it is the wrong tree - perhaps an
African gum-tree and not a Wessex
holly. There may well be other layers
of meaning, such as adding to the
fertility of Africa, as some candidates
supposed, but out of relation to the
primary point they melt into mere
cliches.

At the coordination meeting, one
examiner pointed out that many
teachers, after "taking" a poem with a
class, invite the pupils to do some
creative writing on a related topic; as I



Thomas Hardy

understood her, she was explaining
why so many candidates felt free to
talk about the Falklands rather than
about the poem; explaining also how
"say what it means to you" in the rubric
had been taken by so many candidates
as exonerating them from the need to
convince the examiner that they had
read the hundred words that are the
poem. I have nothing against creative
writing, even when it is only faintly
creative, but it is a different thing.
What is valuable in "Drummer
Hodge" is not the topic but what
Hardy made of it.

Hardy felt deeply for Hodge; to a

considerable extent the Wessex
peasant Hodge is the Wessex peasant
Hardy. Hardy's pity and sadness are of
quite a different order from easy
out-pourings about conscripts in the
Falklands. And since he was a poet, a
major poet, Hardy had the command
of words to communicate his pity and
sadness to ordinary folk, such as
candidates, examiners and the mod-
erator. Poets make available to us
larger experiences than we could
achieve without aid; through poetry,
we may grow. That is why Arnold set
such store by it.

What I have to say, then, is this.
There seem to be an appreciable
number of English teachers who are
devaluing poetry by discounting the
need for close attention. I suggest they
have two duties. The first is to teach
their pupils to see what is visible on a
page. The second is to teach them
tactful ways of convincing the exami-
ner what he needs to know (viz that the
visible has in fact been seen), before
going on to seek out deeper meanings -
which, I am eager to agree, can, when
relevant and controlled, be of supreme
value.

Raymond O'Malley was formerly
director of English Studies at Selwyn
College Cambridge. He is Moderator
for the experimental Plain Texts ex-
amination of the Cambridge Local
Examinations Syndicate.

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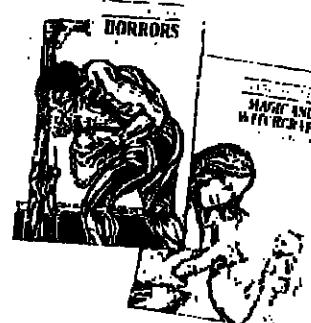
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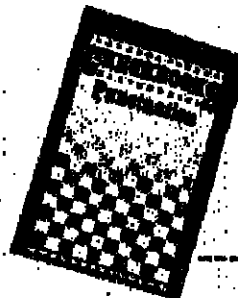
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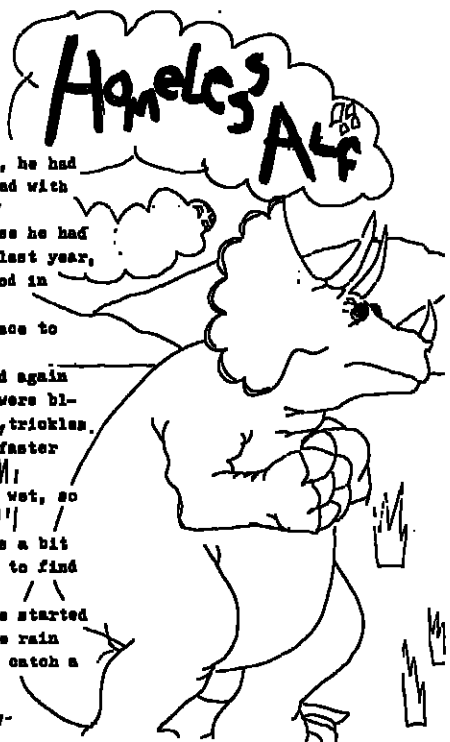
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The case for coursework

By Patrick Scott



HOMELESS ALF

Alf was a young triceratops, he had a large body and a large head with big horns.

Alf wasn't very happy because he had lost his parents this time last year, he lost them in a river flood in the jungle.

But now he had to find a place to sleep.

The weather had just changed again like last year the clouds were black and grey then suddenly, triceratops of rain came down it came faster and faster.

Alf started to get cold and wet, so he ran under a tree.

The next day the weather was a bit better, so he said, I've got to find a place to sleep.

But as he started to walk he started to sneeze, sneeze, sneeze the rain and cold must have made him catch a cold.

whose writing abilities are developing well will show increasingly that they can adapt their writing for different purposes.

That makes assessment much more difficult. The single brief essay question sunk like a bore hole into the child's language just won't do. Even if it strikes a rich seam, there's no guarantee that what it tells you is reliable, and the chances are that you'll find nothing at all. If mastery of language involves mastery of a variety of usage, then you've got to look at a more representative sample in order to make decent judgments.

Whether this can be reconciled with the idea of graded tests remains to be seen. It's quite clear already, however, that it can't be done using conventional exams; the only practical way of doing it is to look at a variety of types of writing produced under a variety of different circumstances. The writing, in other words, that has been undertaken during the course.

It was this in mind that, in 1981, the National Association for the Teaching of English with the financial backing of the Schools Council, established a working party to gather examples of good practice in coursework assessment at 16-plus. Good practice, that is, that conformed with the recent ideas about language. The aim was to describe schemes of work and types of writing that would not have been attempted if conventional exams had been the only available method of assessment. The working party produced their report, called *Coursework in English: 7 Case Studies*, earlier this year.

It's difficult, in an article of this length, to represent all of the case studies fairly. They include descriptions of programmes of work, some of which stretched over several weeks, as well as samples of the writing that was produced by the pupils involved. It was not intended that the report should be a piece of polemic, and so the tone is relaxed, the aim being to share ideas with teachers facing similar problems, rather than to persuade the uncommitted, and this compounds the problem of trying to distill it into a few words. None the less, it's possible to provide a fleeting glimpse at some of the schemes of work described.

Three examples should be sufficient. In the first, John Foggan, teaching in a large comprehensive just outside Leeds, writes about the way in which he made use of an arrangement with a local junior school to encourage older pupils to write stories for younger children. The results, the first page of "Peters' story is shown on this page justifies his claim that real audiences allow pupils to develop an awareness of themselves as writers that is rare.

One of his pupils puts it this way in describing the experience:

The main problem that I found when I was writing my children's book was the way that I had to write it because I could not write how I am writing now instead I had to write this 'hello said Jim' which I find not easy especially when your writing a whole book.

Pat Jones describes how his pupils worked on writing ballads. Taking "Spit Nolan" as a starting point, he offered a series of options including "Write a ballad based on the events of the story". One pupil produced a version that ran to 32 verses and went through several drafts. It starts like this:

Spit Nolan was a bony lad
His face was pale and thin,
But put him in a trolley race
And he would always win.

Ducker Smith he challenged
To race him down the hill,
Spit Nolan knew he was the champ
And said, "Of course I will".

The ballad moves to a conclusion that is as deftly handled as the original. Constantly reiterated by all the teachers involved was the need to encourage good writing habits. It was felt that central to this was the practice of drafting and re-drafting work - a process not normally encouraged by examinations.

While this is referred to in almost all the case studies, Margaret Bond, a teacher in a comprehensive school in Cleveland, describes how she tackled the issue head on. Her account - "Drafting Written Work" - outlines a particular sequence of lessons, but also offers a model for redrafting that could be more widely adopted.

The samples of pupils' writing that are on display don't all read like entries in a prize winning anthology. Though some of them are excellent, they were drawn from across a wide range of ability. What they do suggest, however, is that all the pupils, whatever their limitations, were offering the best of which they were capable and were learning, in the process, to do better.

Coursework in English: 7 Case Studies is published by Longmans for the Schools Council, and is available from Longman Resources Unit, 33-35 Tanner Row, York YO1 1JP at a cost of £2.50. (£2.25 to members of NATE quoting their membership number)

Patrick Scott chaired the NATE working party on coursework and is director of the Durham Sixth Form Centre.

Diary of a chief examiner

Arthur Pollard on the trials and tribulations of of English A level 1983

By 19 All the Special Level scripts (submitted from the nearly 50 centres) were in by the first of September. I shall look at the papers first before getting down to my first onslaught. Read a *Sunday Telegraph* opinion column on the quality of studying Eng Lit - by a former politician (of all people!). Turn to the *Sunday Times* and am met by an opinion column on the trauma of revision at examination times. What about the trauma of examiners?

We are not all as sensitive as Gerard Manley Hopkins, but even after a meeting today - 18 books; most difficult to coordinate, even though most candidates go for the popular Victorian novels and more modern texts. Have to stress that "contrast" between Henchard and Farfrae and "poverty" of the relationship between Jane Eyre and Rochester. Call for just that and that character-sketches are not going to pass. Also have to draw attention to a script in which what at first glance looks like narrative has used this approach with careful selection of relevant material, telling disposition and effective presentation to produce a subtly perceptive response to the question.

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Have been looking at assistant examiners' first samples of their marking. A lot of them seem to be too generous, but at least they are not notably erratic, and that is one small mercy to be thankful for. And the specific emphasis on the need for annotation and analytical final comment on answers, reinforced this year by photocopy samples of exemplary marking, seems to have had some effect.

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Matriculation was the order of the day, but change was in the air of 1909. This class at Westminster School are learning modern languages from the gramophone.

In praise of matriculation

By Arthur Sefton

A few years ago, Eric Partridge spoke of the "insufferable, mindless and horrid changes in our language" of the "undermining of the language by the levelling process", and of the "mediocrity that flourished in literature and at all levels of writing".

"To degrade language," he said, "is to degrade civilization". Poor English is now infesting even the highest places. Many university teachers speak and write slovenly English; many television announcers, commentators and journalists seem to have been poorly instructed in their language, and the language used in Parliament is sometimes illiterate. If, for instance, members persist in using *dilemma* and *alibi* for any excuse, what words are we to use when we wish to denote a dilemma or an alibi?

If we take as our standards those set by the great men of English such as Fowler, Jespersen, Curme, Onions and Partridge, the we must conclude that our language is decaying.

In the early days of this century, great importance was attached to the teaching of English. The matriculation examinations were, in a sense, the bastions of the standards of the language. The system had considerable faults, but, in general, it worked well and ensured that the matriculant had a sound knowledge of the elements of his language and that he could write efficiently. All matriculation candidates had to take English language, for it was held that everyone who proceeded to a degree, arts or science, must be able to write English worthy of an educated person.

Those who were responsible for the teaching and examining of English in the schools realized that order is Heaven's first law, that a language must be stable, flexible, have uniformity of vocabulary and regularity of syntax. They sought to make the best of our imperfect language, to improve it and to ensure that the country had a language that was as efficient, refined and cultured as they could make it.

The modern O level English Language examinations are insipid things that can scarcely be called academic. English Language is the most important subject taught in our schools, and yet, in general, it is the most badly taught of all the major subjects. Vast numbers of secondary school children write English that, to a pre-war matriculation student, would have seemed grossly illiterate. As for A level students, most of them seem to know nothing of the basic structure of their language and often pour out streams of cataclysmic jargon.

Worse! What applies to many A level students applies to many teachers.

of English. I have before me a book on English language written expressly for O level candidates. The writer is a highly experienced English teacher and an O level examiner. Yet, in truth, the book contains much poor English and many elementary mistakes. Judged by the standards of Fowler or Partridge, this examiner would gain, to use his own expression, "less marks" than what would have been required for a pass in the matriculation examinations.

Why has "educated" English declined so? I have space to mention only two most important reasons, namely, that some 40 or so years ago the educational panjandrum virtually decreed that grammar should not be a serious study in our schools. It is instructive to look back at the work of the English Language matriculation student as it was in the early decades of this century. Most students took from three to five years to cover the course. They would work through 100 to 150 pages of heavy text on grammar — which included accident, syntax, analysis and parsing, Composition, paraphrasing and précis-writing necessitated the study of text and a great deal of written work. This included detailed work on figures of speech, prosody and style.

It is not possible here to consider the essay, précis and paraphrase beyond emphasizing the relatively high standard required, but it is of value to look at the subsidiary questions of which there was a great variety. My object is to give some intimation of the technical knowledge of the elements of the language that the student was expected to have.

A candidate might be required to justify or correct a short sentence such as:

We have not and could not have seen a more delightful performance. Most candidates would have had no difficulty with this. The sentence is considered faulty. The word *seen* must be inserted after the first *not*. In the first clause *have seen* is a Present Perfect Infinitive; in the second clause *have seen* is a Perfect Infinitive, object to the verb *could*. A participle must not simultaneously do duty in two different moods.

In another typical question candidates were required to comment on the syntax of these two sentences:

1 The delay prevented the letter being sent.

2 The delay prevented the letter from being sent.

In 1 *being sent* is a passive participle.

used gerundively. (This is now usually called a fused participle.) In 2 *being*

sent is a passive gerund.

Candidates very often had to parse the italicized words in a passage of poetry — usually about a dozen lines. As an example I give two lines taken from a passage of twelve:

blow the good king gave orders to let him
His horns for hunting on the morrow

The candidate was expected to answer in some such way as the following:

to let blow: To let Gerundial Infinitive qualifying the noun *orders* as an adjective would do; it indicates the purpose of the orders.
blow: Noun Infinitive, Complement (not Object) of the verb *let*.
hunting: Gerund formed by adding the suffix *-ing* to the verb stem *hunt*. It is the object of the preposition *for*.
To modern eyes the work of the matriculation student may seem daunting and futile, but it ensured that a successful candidate had a good knowledge of the fundamentals of his language. The examples I have given may not seem greatly helpful: some of the requirements were rather overdone, but most of the work was useful. It is, for instance, good to be able to see the logical incongruity of the following sentence. The point turns on grammar and would have been taken at once by most candidates:

The policeman said that the prisoner had a wife and child, but was not apparently mentally deficient.

The writer failed to realize that *but* is here an adversative conjunction. The sentence is absurd unless its purpose is to indicate obliquely that the policeman was a misogynist.

Most modern O level candidates would see nothing wrong with: I fancied I should get on well by degrees and that I had a good chance of ultimate success; whereas the matriculation candidate would, as a matter of course, have written:

I fancied that I should get on well by degrees, and had a good chance of ultimate success.

The last example is very elementary, yet the majority of O and A level candidates know little or nothing of the sound principles on which it is based. Candidates were often required to resolve a complicated and difficult passage of prose or poetry into its constituent clauses. For example, in June 1910, they had to write out all the subordinate clauses in a passage of 16 lines taken from Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*. They had also to state the words each clause depended on.

continued

In praise of matriculation

The exercises in synthesis were valuable. In September 1909, candidates were asked to rewrite in three sentences a passage on *The Wooden Horse*; they were not to use colons, semicolons or the word *and*. This passage, printed below, has 197 words, contains 12 sentences and is a typical test of the candidates' syntactical ingenuity.

Some matriculation students of a century bent took a paper on the history of the English language. To the modern mind the questions seem appallingly awesome. I give a typical example:

Show the position of English among other Teutonic languages. What consonantal changes have been observed to prevail between cognate words in English and any other of these languages?

What can be done to improve the language? First, the educational authorities must recover their hold on the word that grammar is of fundamental importance. A language must have its own conventions: the better these are the better the language. Lexicographers and other scholars and authorities must resolutely resist foolish, inefficient and otiose innovations. They must accept this responsibility and there must be no pusillanimous thinking from it. Only in this way will there be fruitful interplay between people and scholars. This dialectical movement is the power that builds and enriches the language and produces that fine instrument which is essential for a truly civilized and cultured society.

We need a modernized "matric" English course for the brighter pupils. It would do much to prevent further decay of the language and the

literati. All should be taught Received Standard English for the sake of efficiency and social unity.

Change in language is necessary and inevitable: decay is neither. How right Eric Partridge was when he said that to degrade the language is to degrade civilization! It does and it has.

APPENDIX

The following exercise in the synthesis of sentences was taken from a matriculation paper dated September 1909. Rewrite the following passage in three sentences, avoiding colons, semi-colons and the use of the word *and*:

The Greeks had been besieging Troy. The siege had gone on for ten years. It was all in vain. One of the Greeks contrived a device. He made a horse of wood. It was to be filled with armed men. The Greeks were to pretend to return home. They were to hide behind an island. It was hoped the wooden horse would be taken inside the walls of Troy. The Trojans found that the Greeks were gone. The Greeks seemed to have returned home. The Trojans dragged the wooden horse inside their city. They were told it had been left as a peace-offering. They were told it was an offering to Minerva. They were warned by one of their priests. The priest said they should leave the wooden horse alone. He said the Greeks were to be feared, even when they were offering a gift. The Trojans held a feast that night. They rejoiced. Then they went to sleep. The armed men issued from the horse. The Greeks had returned. The Greeks entered. They took the inhabitants by surprise. They slew many of them. They possessed themselves of the city.

Before his retirement Arthur Sefton taught at the Princess Margaret Royal Free School, Windsor.

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Innocents abroad

Ray Gordon suggests travel writing as a
motivation for developing writing skills

One of the problems in teaching writing skills is that of motivation. Unless a teacher is prepared to be coercive (which can, like using writing tasks as punishments, set up negative attitudes towards writing that may persist for life), he or she has to find subject matter which will entice children into writing. One area which is insufficiently exploited is travel.

Nearly all children like to travel and if the writing about it can be a little more imaginative than "what I did on my summer holiday" there are possibilities for self-expression and self-development which few other subjects can offer. It may even be that some of the better pieces done by a class can be submitted to publications for consideration. There is no greater reward or encouragement to write than seeing one's name and work in print.

The first thing to do is to reassure the class that it is not only foreign travel that is of interest. Some children may rarely have the opportunity even to join a school trip. This does not matter. Writing about the locality in which they live, as if through the eyes of a tourist, can be a useful and instructive activity.

A travel-writing programme designed to improve skill in written expression can, of course, take many forms. One approach is to suggest to children who are taking a trip that they should do some of the things that professional travel writers do in their search for interesting material, including making sure they take the right things with them.

It is useful to have a clipboard and other hand writing surface which can be worked on not only at a desk, but also in trains and boats and planes. Most of these contain plastic pockets in

which notes and completed pieces can be kept. A camera is a handy accessory both for recording memorable moments and for recording visually things which will later be written about. For similar reasons, a tape recorder (not forgetting a spare set of batteries) is an asset.

Travel literature collected before the trip is essential for background purposes, but literature collected on the trip may be even more helpful. If this creates a weight problem for young shoulders, it can be sent home by the cheapest post (large brown envelopes may be best taken along for this as they may not be readily available in some countries). It is not a bad idea, either, to take some postcards or photos of one's own home area to show people, as this may make them more forthcoming about theirs.

Other items which have both travelling and general uses include a torch (for reading maps in the dark or for checking suggestions). A Swiss Army-style knife can be recommended for older children (you never know when you might have to extract a stone from a horse's hoof or, more probably, open a bottle or a can).

Once in the locality or the country to be written about, it helps to engage in activities which are likely to produce the desired kind of material. One of the most useful activities can be to take a sightseeing tour, if this is not already an integral part of the trip. A tour helps in translating the somewhat abstract dimensions on maps into perceived reality. The technique is simply to note for future reference rather than try to carry out detailed observation there and then.

It is worth taking a river or lake trip wherever possible. There is something

about water which offers unusual perspectives even on familiar places and the leisurely nature of such excursions allows impressions to form with greater clarity and permanence than even a walkabout allows.

Where it can be arranged (and it usually can), young people can learn a great deal about a place by visiting families in their own homes and by meeting youngsters of their own age group. They should also read the local press, magazines and books, watch any indigenous television they can find and listen to the radio.

Eating where the locals eat, shopping where the locals shop and seeking out old people to interview can all provide information which may not be available in any guidebook. This will add a unique dimension to what is written later which will enhance the quality of the final product. It can also be a genuinely maturing experience.

When it comes to writing up these impressions and experiences, children should be encouraged to identify and write for a specific audience other than themselves or their teacher. They should try to write for a person they can visualize but do not know well. In this way, they may find it easier to achieve what the professional writer strives for, a style which both has its individual stamp and yet also communicates generally.

The benefits of working in this way can reveal themselves in improved written expression, a greater geographical awareness and enhanced self-development. They can also be seen in a greater interest in travel itself and in a deeper understanding of cultural differences and (perhaps more importantly) of similarities between ourselves and others.

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EXTRA

Let it be heard

Nick Baker reports on testing oral English at O level

Oral English needs to be tested at O level. Considering the findings of the Bullock report and the CSE boards' long established practice of oral testing, it seems surprising that only two GCE examining boards offer any sort of spoken English examination. Perhaps teachers and examination boards have fought shy of the idea because of the number of practical and philosophical problems involved.

All the syllabuses I looked at were at great pains to point out that what they are looking for above all else is the ability of a candidate to communicate effectively. However, some of them seem hard put to define exactly what that means. The London University board says that a candidate's voice should be "... produced in an efficient manner, with appropriate physical vitality". Both London and the AEB require reading aloud as part of the test, yet many teachers with first-hand knowledge of how difficult effective reading aloud really is would regard it as an unlearned art rather than a teachable skill.

Real problems seem to occur when boards use terms like "enunciation" and "accent". For example, the AEB, in its instructions for conduct of the joint O/CSE examination says emphasis will be placed on "audibility, fluency, accuracy and extent of vocabulary, rather than on 'correctness' of enunciation ...", then seems to contradict itself by asking for scores for enunciation on the examiner's score sheet.

Perhaps the AEB's Mode III syllabus, English for Mature Students, gets nearest to solving the recent problem by saying, in its criteria that "local accents will not be penalized provided that speech would be readily intelligible to someone from another area". However, what one examiner may call a cockney accent, another may call slovenliness of speech.

Another difficult area is that of deciding how many marks the oral examination will award, or whether, as in the case of modern language O levels, an oral grade should be separ-

ately awarded. Some disparity arises between the individual syllabuses, with the oral component accounting for between 9 per cent in the case of the AEB O/A examination, and 20 per cent in some of the AEB's Mode III's.

In some of the syllabuses, a proportion of the final mark will be awarded by the candidate's class teacher under the heading of "Oral Course Work". This may be helpful in that it encourages English teachers to plan regular sessions of oral work as part of their class teaching. It does, though, lay the onus on them to provide suitably stimulating and challenging oral work. It also calls for a good deal of skill in making objective assessments.

The whole area of teacher objectivity could be called into question, particularly where, in the case of the AEB syllabuses, teachers themselves perform the role of examiner. Although the candidate will not necessarily find himself sitting opposite his class teacher in the final examination, the likelihood is that he and the examiner will not be total strangers.

The implicit pitfalls of this situation have to be minimized by careful moderation procedures. When a school embarks on one of the syllabuses an external moderator will, in the case of the AEB's joint examination, sit in on some "dummy run" interviews with non-candidates (thus examining, in effect, the examiner!) and he may also attend some of the first interviews as well, to check the marking.

The AEB joint examination oral is also tape recorded for the purpose of sample moderation. Although this can make some candidates and even some teacher-examiners a little daunted, it does seem one simple way of assuring fair play. It does, however, mean added organization problems for the school.

The AEB's O (Alternative) syllabus is also moderated externally. With this syllabus, because the subject of the oral test is the candidates' extended essay, already marked and graded, there can be no practice or mock oral examination. With all the centres I

talked to, the AEB's habit seems to be to make a very careful moderation of the centres' first entry of candidates, then in subsequent years "slacken off", and in some cases not return at all.

One obvious disadvantage of all teacher-examined or assessed work is the amount of extra pressure it puts on teachers. On the other hand, the London board's visiting examiners have the problem of drawing out and getting the best from randomly chosen groups of three candidates who they don't know at all. Candidates are required to read, discuss a given topic and take part in an individual interview with the examiner. The topics for conversation are linked to the reading passages supplied by the board. These are handed out by the examiner, so there is no element of choice on the candidate's part.

Whether the examiner is a visitor appointed by the board or a teacher at the school or college concerned, there is no doubt that his or her skill in drawing the candidates out and allowing the candidates to acquit themselves as well as possible is just as important as his judgement in awarding marks. Ruth Cole, until this year oral moderator for the AEB joint examination and moderator for AEB Mode III oral examinations, now head of English at London's Kingsway Princes College comments: "In no other examination is it possible for the examiner to cause the candidate to fail."

For many heads of English, the problems with oral examining are much more practical, particularly where teacher-examiners are called for. The AEB encourages the attendance of two teachers in some of the oral tests. This can mean increased pressure on staffing and rooms at a difficult time of the year, especially where an "outer" room for preparation of readings is needed.

There is the added need for quiet, particularly if the examination is being tape recorded. Above all, the room should present a relaxed, almost informal atmosphere to put the candidates at their ease. A hastily evacuated office, complete with ringing phone, or

| EXAMINATION BOARD | CONTENT OF ORAL EXAM | ASSESSMENT |
|---|---|--|
| University of London | Reading, group discussion in three, individual interview. | Visiting Examiner. Certificate separately endorsed 'With Spoken English' Grade A, B or C. |
| Associated Examining Board: O (Alternative) | Discussion using candidate's extended essay as starting point. | Examined by teacher, moderated externally by visiting moderator. Accounts for 9% of final mark. |
| AEB: Joint O level/CSE with South East Region Exam Board. | Reading and interview. Course work. | Examined by teacher. Taped for external moderation. Oral course work grade gives 5% of final mark, assessed by teacher. Oral exam gives 10% of final mark. |
| AEB: O (Alternative) (Professional and Business Use) | Business report delivered from notes. Discussion or telephone conversation. | Examined by teacher, moderated externally, by visiting moderator. Accounts for 20% of final mark. |
| AEB: (Mode III, Kingsway-Princes College, London) | Interview. Course work. | Examined by teacher, moderated externally. Oral course work gives 10% of final mark. Oral exam gives 10%. |
| AEB: (Mode III) O level English for Mature Students | Any two from: Prepared Talk. Group Discussion. Interview. | Examined by teacher, moderated externally. Accounts for 20% final mark. |

The (above) Table shows some of the O level oral English syllabuses on offer. The Associated Examining Board operates numerous Model examinations, in which an oral component is included.

an abandoned PE store room smelling of old rugby socks will not do! One head of English told me he needed 10 days for his two staff to interview 120 candidates for the AEB joint examination.

Those involved with creating the final syllabus for the 16-plus English examination will have two problems in connection with oral testing. One will be in standardizing national criteria for the testing of spoken English. The other, possibly more difficult decision to be made will be whether to integrate

oral marks into the final grade or give a separate assessment.

From what I have learned from talking to English teachers, the argument for integrating the grade is that spoken and written English are impossible to differentiate, because they are integral parts of the whole phenomenon. Those who support the idea of separate assessment say that it gives colleges and prospective employers a more detailed picture of potential students' and employees' ability in English.

necessarily be followed up. Their genesis is in that old chestnut about the child on a nature walk who says to her friend who is stooping to examine something, "Don't pick that up or you'll have to write about it when we get back".

Having said that, our experience of piloting two of these programmes with eight and nine-year-olds suggests that the absence of words in the programme may produce a lot of them from the children.

Our aim in producing *Ways With Words* is to encourage children to reflect on their own experiences, to value them and to try to put them into words.

When I do this I realize that the influences of my formative years are still echoing. I'm glad that Billy Casper wasn't suffocated by work cards and buried in a colour coded box.

Graham Sellors is the producer of *Ways With Words*. *Ways With Words*, an English series for eight to ten year-olds, is produced by Central for independent television. Transmitted fortnightly throughout the year: Friday 10.09, Tuesday 11.09.

REGENCY EDITOR
Patrick O'Leary

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est source of raw material in education, particularly in language development.

From both a broadcasting and a teaching point of view, there is nothing particularly new about this. If there seems to be so it is simply because television English programmes for lower juniors have reflected the creative writing approach for longer than was good for them, while some teachers have had their heads in colour coded boxes of graded exercises.

The philosophy, topics and programme outlines for *Ways With Words* come from the series advisers Hilary Minns, head of Courthouse, Green Primary School, Coventry, and Mike Torbe, English adviser for the same authority. The topics include moving house, starting a new school, children's games, fears, parties, pets, children's special and secret places, collecting things, day-dreams and calling names.

All of the programmes feature children. In choosing these we've tried to reflect the plural and multi-cultural nature of society. Some programmes are dramatized, others are in documentary form. In the dramatized ones, we offered a framework and plot within which the children could improvise their own words. Like many teachers, we found that children could improvise with vitality and credibility but given a script they sounded as though they were reading in assembly.

In most of the programmes the children are treated as a slice of their experience, having a birthday party, changing a light bulb, getting a picture, or something and saying their names. Sometimes these experiences

were interwoven with similar experiences of adults, mainly, but not exclusively, writers to show how these have been expressed in stories, poems, information books or as part of work or leisure. This provides models of language and form, not to be copied, but to introduce the children to a range of styles of writing and talking.

Catherine Storr tells Coventry children about her childhood fears and how she wrote the "Polly" stories because her daughter was afraid of wolves. Richard Steele talks about his hobby of collecting skulls and how when he was 16 he wrote *Skulls* which won *The TES* Information Book Award for 1981. Michael Rosen reveals that several of his poems came about because he was picked on and called names.

Other programmes include some commissioned writing from Gareth Owen, poems by Kit Wright and Stephen Spender and Gyles Brandreth's own entertaining and idiosyncratic ways with words.

One aspect of the series is novel. The final programme in each term is called "Ways Without Words" and is completely non-verbal. Two of these programmes feature Mick Wall, a clownlike, in silent films which exploit slapstick and visual humour. The third has a dance-in-education group, "Lynx Dance", using a variety of contemporary dance techniques to convey feelings and tell a story.

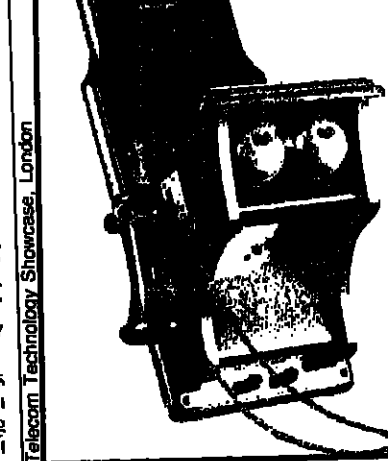
These three programmes are intended primarily as performances to be shared and we hope enjoyed by both teachers and pupils. They stem from the conviction that not every child has experienced in school need

showcase, 10 Queen Victoria Street, London EC4A 3DF. Tel 01-248 7444. On Monday-Thursday 10.00-4.30. Admission free. School parties by request.

Alexander Graham Bell spoke the famous words "Mr Watson, come here, I want to see you", neither by radio, nor by telephone, but by the far-reaching development of the first transatlantic cable that would follow that first telephone message over the next hundred years.

Bell would have needed a crystal ball to see now it's difficult for the specialist to grasp the staggering scale of what's happening in the history of communications. "British Telecom's Technology Showcase" can be recommended as a primary source to the bewilderment.

The Showcase opened 18 months ago and since then has attracted a steady flow of visitors, including school groups. Yet its existence, or at least its function and its usefulness as an educational resource, is probably less widely known than it ought to be. "Showcase" unfortunately suggests a kind of outlet for telephone sales rather than the fascinating museum of technology that you find when you get there. No doubt, "museum" was chosen because it has dusty, old-fashioned connotations that don't suit a streamlined image, but it's a



very good job. The main floor is dedicated to a step-by-step chronology of communications technology, from early experiments with electricity and the beginnings of telegraphy to current developments and the "Digital Revolution", on which there's a special section. The lower floor concentrates on different aspects of technical systems and services in more detail. For as museums go, this one does a

RESOURCES

Does it ring a bell?

Liz Heron looks into a telecommunications showcase packed with items of historical interest

Both are packed with exhibits of incalculable historical interest.

The very first telephone directories are there; there's an array of recognizable period telephones; there's the electrophone, forerunner of dial-tone, with which Edwardian subscribers could listen to theatre or concert performances; and original telegrams and newspaper reports chronicling such events as the laying of the first successful transatlantic telegraph cable after repeated failures in 1866.

On the whole, captions are clear and the attention to detail matches the authenticity of exhibits. There are imaginative reconstructions: a railroad telegraph office complete with original apparatus that must surely conjure up scenes from scores of Hollywood westerns; an early switchboard with operators. The whole experience is en-

livened by an abundance of working models.

On the day I was there these were being fully exploited by a group of students from Southwark College calling each other up on the new Telecom phones, trying out the old ones attached to the old local exchange whose rattling internal workings can be closely observed, watching the analogues of electrical waves produced by their voices, trying out the latest telex machine and operating the slow scanner whereby the telephone can now transmit still images on to a blank television screen.

This all gave the exhibition an added dimension - sound. As well as the simulated sounds of trench warfare accompanying a reconstruction of First World War telephone wireless communications, there's the staccato noise

of Morse being tapped out, the subdued rhythms of the buzzer, telephones ringing and buzzing. But the noise level is unobtrusive, sometimes too unobtrusive. With its barely audible soundtrack and projection on a video screen (too high up for anyone but adults and older children), "The Telephone Fairy", a small gem from the archives of the Post Office Film Unit, risks being overlooked.

It's a rather awesomely crowded field to cover and there's little breathing space between the sections, but this is counterbalanced by a strong sense of social history - what the development of the communications services meant in terms of everyday life for users and for the people who worked in them, like the telephonist's lot and her social standing; the effects of communications on warfare and administration of the Empire; the telephone boom of the pre-war Depression. The pantheon of inventors is acknowledged, but the emphasis is not on great men with brainwaves.

One of the most sensational contemporary devices is the facsimile transmitter that can dispatch a sheet of graphics or text to an identical machine anywhere in the world within 30 seconds. I watched a Showcase staff member explain to a suitably impressed group of teenagers, then proceed to demonstrate on the pair of machines beside her. Nothing happened. "It's not working!" she called out to a colleague who then rushed up to investigate. Staggering it all is. Fallible too.

Epic thrills

Beowulf. Performed by Julian Glover. Videotape 26.50 inc VAT, postage and packing; videotape £39.50 inc VAT postage and packing; text £1.15. London: Saxon Publications Ltd, Towns, 14, Paulthorpe, Wiltshire SN10 2ND (0198-082337).

A glorious action that a man of the tenth century AD. One of the problems facing the teacher of the poem today is that this idea has long been relegated to history books and comic strips.

Whether justly or not might better be argued out between rival football supporters. The epic has been marginalized. Julian Glover, who performs his very own as a rattling good yarn, simply reads the poem and endures. This *Beowulf* is the Silver Surfer.

Of course, that dimension of the poem is a real one. Anglo-Saxon ballads like nothing better than a good battle scene, unless it was a good hunt. And *Beowulf* has action-packed moments aplenty, fit stuff for boys to read about brandishing swords.

Mr Glover's voice thrills with danger and makes the climaxes, relishes the glory of the slayings and the might of the warriors. But that dark current of evil against which *Beowulf*

battles is less eloquently evoked. Though Christian, the Anglo-Saxon view of life was pessimistic, and civilization was encompassed hard about by all sorts of terrors, to which Christianity had also added the terror of eternal damnation.

Beowulf's "great heart" lay not in sallying forth invincibly, but in saving his people at the cost of his own life. In short, *Beowulf* is tragic as well as heroic.

These aspects of the poem are not emphasized in Julian Glover's recordings. However, his evident enjoyment of the story, and of the parts of the original poem which he interlaces in his modern prose equivalent, do lend valuable flavour to a work which has too often been drained of its original meatiness by renderings that are too lifelessly close to the original alliterative Old English or too racily modern to catch the solemn tone of epic.

At one and a quarter hours, the tapes are too long to listen to in one stretch, but the tale splits readily enough into two. Since the battle between good and evil ought to be appreciated by viewers of Japanese puppet shows and *Star Wars*, et al, Mr Glover's performance might offer teachers a way in to show the deeper discussion of these matters which literature has had, from time to time, to offer.

Victoria Neumark

Lung power

The Lung Power sound colour film 25 minutes running time. Released in 1982 by Educational Media, Melbourne, Australia. Produced for the Australian Academy of Sciences as part of the School Biology Project. Sales inquiries to Educational Media International, 25 Bolleau Road, London W5 3AL.

The film starts interestingly with shots of sheep running and draws attention to their breathing. Next a dissection of a sheep is examined closely, the main parts of the thoracic cavity are identified - rib cage, lungs, diaphragm, heart, etc. The morphology and nature of the fresh lung is illustrated, and by use of a microscope, sections of prepared lung tissue are demonstrated and the nature of its structure brought out. We then return to the dissection and, using a sagittal section of the head, the air passages are shown. The lung is opened up to show its internal structure.

The next sequences show the lung in action. In the first part the thoracic cavity of a dog undergoing an operation is seen and the effect of pumping air into the collapsed lungs is effectively demonstrated. Second, by x-ray cinematography, the movement of the ribs and diaphragm of a dog is shown.

This is a film that gets right away from the tradition of showing the lung by means of animated diagrams - there is not a single diagram in it. You are all the time looking at the real thing. There are certain advantages in this, because it gets over the idea of gross structure very effectively. Against that, some, and particularly younger, children may react adversely to the sight of the dead dissected sheep and the scenes of the operated dog.

In welcoming this film as a new approach to examining the structure and function of the lung, I would warn that it is a film that teachers must view first and it is less suitable for younger secondary school pupils.

John A. Barker

Techmart Awards

The Techmart Schools Trophy

Barclays' "Techmart" will be staged at the National Exhibition Centre Birmingham on 21-25 February 1984

First of a series of annual events to provide a showcase for technology, the highlight of the exhibition will be the presentation of the **Techmart Awards for New Technology, Education and Development**. These are aimed at encouraging wider use of British research and development to help create more jobs.

The Department of Trade and Industry's Industry/Education Unit is sponsoring the **Techmart Schools Trophy**, for the secondary school which has done most to encourage technologically orientated links with industry during the last 12 months.

Nominations will only be accepted from representatives of local education authorities or individual teachers. These should be made by letter (of not more than 1,500 words) and can include documentary evidence of the main features of the case.

Nominations should be sent (enclosing a return addressed envelope if acknowledgement is needed) to:

Techmart Schools Trophy
Department of Trade and Industry
Ashdown House
129 Victoria Street
London SW1E 6RB

III

Nominations should be received by 10 December 1983

As a teacher in the 1960s, I had my eyes opened by Billy Casper whose tongue was unlocked by a kestrel and a teacher who valued his experiences and wasn't afraid to let him talk about things that he himself knew little about.

While I was reading *A Kestrel for a Knave* to fourth years, I was taking BBC Radio's *Listening and Writing* with second years, with teacher's notes that said: "Their (children's) raw material is within and around them; their fresh impressions of the world and their experience of it exist and are of value in their own right. Apart from this they can help themselves towards

The memory lingers on...

By Graham Sellors

maturity by digesting their experience into words.

Now I'm involved in making *Ways With Words* a new independent television English series for eight and nine-year-olds. It sees talking and listening as basic skills, and is about the interests, emotions and experiences of children, recognizing these as the rich

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OF GREAT BRITAIN

MEDIA

Radio 1, in jinglespeak, gives you "all the hits and more". In the first half of this year the "more" element has included evening talk programmes on herps, capital punishment, contraception, blood sports, and the situation in Central America.

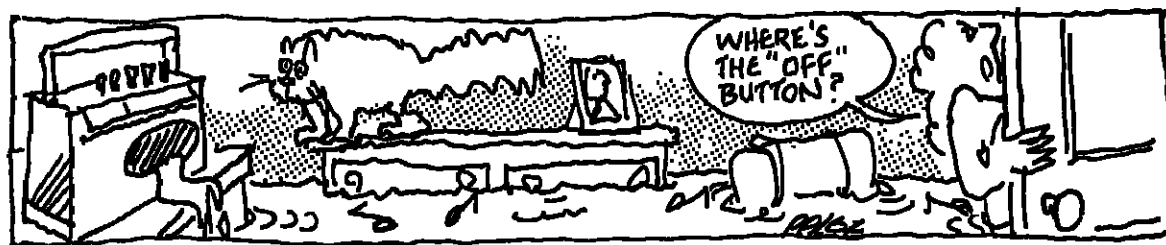
On a national network committed to playing pop music since it took over from the pirates in the sixties, talk programmes have never been the top priority. But talk shows designed to inform, advise and entertain a young audience had expanded over the years so that a few weeks ago between 7.00 and 8.00 pm from Monday to Thursday you could hear *Platform 9*, *Frontline*, *Mallmag* and *Talkabout*.

But at the beginning of September things changed dramatically. In one clean sweep they were all pulled off the air. In their place is a single programme that consists largely of music. Radio 1's Controller Derek Chinnery acknowledges that their younger audience listen to Radio 1 almost exclusively. With this in mind, it seems strange to pull off all its talk shows. Does Radio 1 not have some sort of moral responsibility to educate its younger listeners?

"We have not abandoned the concept of talk on Radio 1 - far from it," says Derek Chinnery. "The changes are not necessarily a great change in philosophy. We've had all sorts of programmes, involving phone-ins, discussions, access for young people, but all the audience research points to the fact that they're not actually very successful in attracting the audience they're aimed at."

The regular evening format of talk programmes began in 1978 when the network broke away com-

All the hits and more?



pletely from the planning shackles of Radio 2, and when a report on Broadcasting and Youth had concluded: "Young adults have needs which are quite distinct from the rest of the adult population, and these needs are not being adequately met by broadcasters at the moment." It noted the impact of Radio 1 on the young audience, and recommended that there should be more programmes giving non-music information and advice. Five years on, the reverse seems to have happened. "But people are listening to us because they have an expectation of rock and pop music, which is what we were set up to do," says Derek Chinnery. "We're aware that the audience out there have other interests. But there's no purpose in maintaining programmes of intensity and depth if half-way through you find that most of the audience have left you."

The recent quartet of *Platform 9*, *Frontline*, *Mallmag* and *Talkabout* were derivations and refinements of programmes broadcast over the last ten years: a music-based magazine, an attempt to "go behind the headlines", a young person's exchange of views

and a current affairs discussion. "Where we have tried to give access to young people to raise the issues that they would like to know more about," says Derek Chinnery, "we've found that there is actually only a fairly limited range. The bomb might be the

Does Radio 1 have a moral responsibility to educate the young? Simon Garfield reports on its recent decision to drop talk shows

thing that concerns us all most, but you can't do a programme on it every week."

Since its inception just over a year ago, *Frontline* has covered not only the bomb and CND (Defence Secretary Michael Heseltine was a guest in the penultimate programme), but also subjects as diverse as the Falklands, the exam system and style.

Simon Shaw, one of the *Frontline*

producers claims that when he was growing up, he always felt that "there was some sort of mystique about news and current affairs because there was always too much assumed knowledge. When we first talked about the programme we were keen to demystify."

Though essentially an open-access slot, he points out that some programmes have been more deliberately educational - to inform rather than to canvas opinion - the programme on herps, for example: "We started the programme by asking 'Is it the scourge of the eighties?' Most people we spoke to in a pub didn't even know what it was, except that it was something to be avoided."

Another programme - on Central America - also set out to be chiefly informative, but the *Frontline* team soon found that callers were often more knowledgeable than themselves.

The view that young people are keen to hear the voices and opinions of other young people has been somewhat revised. Doreen Davies, the executive producer at Radio 1 with the responsibility for talk shows, doubts whether they want to be treated as a

separate case from their elders. "I think you'll find that everyone over the age of 12 feels adult. They're just as likely to pick up *The Sun* or *The Guardian* or *The Times* as anybody else. We must not be in danger of patronizing our audience."

Another problem has been to avoid reinforcing the stereotypes of young people in the news as either hoodlums or whizz-kids.

So the network is effectively starting again with a clean sheet. Controller Derek Chinnery is keen to continue with a tested policy of "campaigns" - a series of short, seven-minute packages which go out at peak times aimed at a particular section of listeners.

"This is a much more effective way of communicating with our younger audience. And although the expectations of the audience for the new three-hour David Jensen show will be basically music, hopefully we will include incidents of talk appropriately timed and placed so that they don't actually become a switch-off."

Indeed the new Jensen show does provide short topical bursts of informative chat between records - on everything from heroin addiction to how to set up your own business - but lacks the depth of previous discussions and can cover far fewer topics.

Newsbeat has survived the recent changes and continues to provide a punchy round-up of home and international news in an unpatronizing presentation in two daily 15-minute slots. Having talked to about 30 Radio 1 listeners aged between 12 and 28, it seems that most will not much miss the talk shows. Only two were concerned to learn that they had not been rescheduled, mainly because it might mean less chance to air their own opinions.

The human face of war

RADIOVISION
History: Not So Long Ago
The Great War
Radio 4 VHF, Tuesdays 14.00
Five weekly programmes ending 29 November: The Great War (Radiovision); The Soldier; The Sailor; The Airman; The Nurse.
The Great Warfilmstrip is available. £25.00, plus V.A.T., from BBC Publications School, One Section, 144-152 Bermondsey St. London SE1.

The BBC continues to break new ground with the second unit in this year's cycle of history broadcasts for younger pupils. The resource list of material on the Great War is already formidable, much of it of the highest quality. There are few classroom experiences, for example, to rival the deeply poignant conclusion to the BBC's own *In the Trenches*, now sadly no longer available. For very good reasons most of the existing material has been aimed at older pupils.

The radiovision programme provides a riveting start. For most pupils this will probably be their first detailed encounter with modern warfare. The intention is to give a brief overall view of life in the First World War as well as providing a framework for the other four programmes.

Military details, chronology and politics take second place to the human dimensions of warfare. War posters and the work of the more famous war artists comprise the body of the filmstrip. The script is simple and direct, often very moving and is supported by a convincing range of sound effects. It could be used with older pupils.

George Coppard's experiences provide the basis for an insight into the world of the soldier. Enthusiastic enlistment was soon followed by an introduction to the novel qualities of the machine and the nightmare world of the Western Front.

Pupils will be struck by Coppard's reaction to the death of his friend Bill Bailey, "a puppet whose strings have suddenly snapped", by his own great fear of dying without anyone really knowing about it, by his regret at not being in at the finish and by his bitterness as he joined the post-war queues for dead-end jobs. The catalogue of misery and human anguish simply confirms the view that there was nothing good about this war except the ordinary, often remarkable, people who took part in it.

The sailor and the airman saw action of a different kind. As a fully qualified engineer Gilbert Ashead was skilled in the repair and maintenance of naval machinery. Half of his fellow apprentices were killed in a single night. Ashead saw the fighting in the Dardanelles at first hand, including the sinking of the French cruiser Bouvet.

Cecil Lewis was sent to France after having completed only 14 hours' solo flying. Minimal training was a certain guarantee of a low life expectancy amongst pilots on the Western Front. The empty chair at dinner time told the story of the day. Lewis returned from a fortnight's leave to find that he had been awarded the Military Cross and that five of his friends had been killed during his absence. There is no doubt as to which mattered more to him.

In these broadcasts suffering and death are always an intensely personal

affair, never a matter of statistics. Nowhere is this clearer than in the experiences of the nurse, the "Rose of No Man's Land". The morning bugle announced the arrival of the first convoy of wounded. Nursing staff were overwhelmed by the sheer volume of the injured. Dedication, stamina, kindness and nerves of steel seemed to be the essential qualities for those who offered their services to the Voluntary Aid Detachment. Some children may not find this programme easy to take, particularly the harrowing fatality with which it concludes.

Each of these units resonates with the pointlessness and unredeemed nastiness of this war. Human anguish on this scale needs at the very least some deep moral purpose, but apart from victory for its own sake there was, of course, none. Nowhere was there any real sense of triumph. In every case the consequences were so much more awful than anyone anticipated.

Some doubts must remain as to how much of all this is appropriate for younger pupils. They will certainly take it seriously, will be fascinated by most of it and will be stretched to master new ideas and vocabulary. If nothing else they will sense that there is something here which is worth knowing more about.

This is a first-class series made by people who know through experience and instinct what will work in the classroom. The teacher's notes are excellent. They indicate clearly what needs to be done in preparation for the broadcast, summarize the main points which are covered and suggest useful ideas for further work.

Gorman Stafford



CHILDREN'S TELEVISION
The Magic Micro Mission
Central, T.V. area, Wednesdays 5.15pm from 9 November.

It had to happen. A television series about computers and computer games aimed at children as young as seven but carrying an information load sufficient to fascinate most adults.

With an estimated two million "on line" by the end of this year, already Britain has twice as many home computers as Germany, France and Italy combined. Yet to many people - owners and non-owners alike - they remain a mystery.

Central Television's *Magic Micro Mission* plans to change all that. Set in a fictional spaceship, 3,000 light years out from earth and an offshoot of Central's successful *Venture* series, the programme has already been dubbed "the technological *Tinies*".

Its aim is to demystify computer technology by mixing the styles of *Tomorrow's World* and *Star Trek* - boldly going where no programme has gone before. Adrian Hedley (you've seen him on *ATV's Over to You* and as the presenter of *Jigsaw* on BBC Television) is the lively Captain Kirk-like commander of the mission. Newcomer Jo Wheeler is his second-in-command. Let's appear too lightweight, however, the spaceship also has its own Egghead, Dr John Barker, Lecturer in Physics at the University of

Micro magic

Warwick. He looks after the factual side, explaining the difference between hardware and software in the first programme and then talking about such subjects as disc drive, BASIC, RAM, ROM and computer networks.

New, it is timed to catch the avalanche of new computer games coming into the shops for Christmas, the series also features a consumer panel of five children who gamely play their way through the software. Aged between 12 and 16 with varying levels of "computeracy", they are nevertheless clear about their likes and dislikes. More than one game is damned as "slow" and "boring".

Each week there are also visiting celebrities, "Silicon Superstars" who have been using computers in their various fields of work. In the first programme DJ Dave Lee Travis talks about how he keeps records of the Hit Parade on his home computer. Later in the series David Gower bowls a googly in the direction of computer cricket.

Fun, flip, but also containing a lot of information, the programmes are on their own - at the moment. It will be interesting to see how quickly other programme makers discover the home computer market and mount their own versions. Will it be before children are finally turned off computers, as *Micro Mission* editor Geoffrey Negus believes they will be? They have already become old hat at school, he says.

Hugh David

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Scale 1 Posts

Appointments in Scotland

Independent Schools

Deputy Headships Senior

Masters/Mistresses

Art and Design

Classics

Commercial Subjects

Computer Studies

Craft Design & Technology

Economics

English

Geography

History

Home Economics

Mathematics

Modern Languages

Music

Pastoral

Physical Education

Religious Education

Science

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ILEA

Inner London Education Authority

Qualified teachers are invited to apply for the following posts. Application forms and further details are available from the Head of the school unless indicated otherwise. Visits to schools by appointment are welcomed. Inner London Area Payment (£987 p.a.) is made in addition to the appropriate Barnham salary scale. Unless shown differently, the closing date for applications is 14 days from publication. All secondary schools in the ILEA area are organised along comprehensive lines. ILEA is an equal opportunities employer.

PRIMARY SCHOOLS

GREENWICH PARK (SG)
King George Street, SE18 6PY
Tel: 01-858 2211
Roll: 316
Required from January 1984 or as a Head of Withdrawal Unit, Scale 3: to take over the school's well established and successful unit. The post calls for sound teaching experience and expertise in dealing with the wide range of problems of the pupils referred to the Unit. This is an Acting Post as the school closes in July 1985.

ELM COURT (Dedham)
Elm Court Road, SE27
Tel: 01-870 6577
Roll: 108 (all ages mixed)
Headmaster: D. A. Lynn
Required from Easter 1984 teacher, Scale 3.5, for curriculum development and personal care of pupils in the primary department. A teacher with sound knowledge of language development and teaching by direct observation and prepared to teach through school particularly sought. Re-advertisement.

ROSEMARY (ESN(S))
25 Prebend Street, Hillingdon, NI
Tel: 01-262 8123
Roll: 110 (all ages mixed)
Headmaster: Mrs. Jan Lewis
Required from April 1984 teacher, Scale 3.5, to take responsibility for curriculum development. See place.

WINDMILL (ESN(S))
Windmill Road, SW2 5JW
Tel: 01-733 0661
Roll: 113 (all ages)
Required from January 1984, teacher, Scale 3.5. Will have special responsibility for special curriculum of 16-18 year old pupils.

DEPUTY HEADSHIP

ST MARGARET'S CE (IM&N(C))
St Margaret's Grove, Plumstead, SE18 7RL
Tel: 01-854 3032
Roll: 265 (all ages mixed)
Headmaster: Miss L. M. Damsie
Required from April 1984, Deputy Head, to take over the school's primary department. The post calls for a Christian teacher and in full sympathy with the teaching of the Church of England. Application form and further details from the Chairman of the Governors at the school.

Post of Responsibility

ARCHBISHOPSTON'S CE (SI)
55 Kensington Oval, SE11 5SR
Tel: 01-735 3771
Headmaster: R. C. Shepard
Required as a well qualified and experienced teacher of Mathematics, Scale 3, to join a well organised and successful department. Ability to offer Computer and Numeracy Certificate courses. Apply by letter with cv and the names of two referees to the Headmaster.

ST VERONICA'S RC (SG)
Fleet Street, SE1 1QB
Tel: 01-703 4726
Required from January 1984 a teacher of Religious Education, Scale 1-2, with experience of teaching across the age range and to public examination standards. The ability to teach Development Education, Mathematics or other named subject would be an advantage.

SCIENCE

SIR WILLIAM COLLINS (SA)
Charrington Street, NW1 1RO
Tel: 01-587 0126
Headmaster: Pamela Turner
Required from January 1984 or as a Mathematics teacher, Scale 2. SMILE has been introduced to assist ability groups in the first two years. The successful candidate will be committed to extending SMILE into the other years. An interest in the use of SMILE programmes and the 387 microprocessor an advantage.

SIR WILLIAM COLLINS (SM)
Charrington Street, NW1 1RO
Tel: 01-587 0126
Headmaster: Pamela Turner
Required from January 1984 or as a Mathematics teacher, Scale 2. SMILE has been introduced to assist ability groups in the first two years. The successful candidate will be committed to extending SMILE into the other years. An interest in the use of SMILE programmes and the 387 microprocessor an advantage.

SOCIAL SCIENCE

WALWORTH (SM)
Shenstone Road, SE15 5JL
Tel: 01-703 3431
Roll: 1,260
Headmaster: G. B. Cropper
Required from January 1984 teacher, Scale 1, for Sociology/Social Studies for the first three years willing to develop the relationship with associate subjects.

BLACKHEATH BLUECOAT CE (SI)
Old Dover Road, Blackheath, SE3
Tel: 01-858 8221
Headmaster: Miss S. M. Houlton
Required from January 1984, for two teachers in the SMILE course with the first school and Integrated Studies in the first three years willing to develop the relationship with associate subjects.

SPECIAL NEEDS

Head of Department
BLACKHEATH BLUECOAT CE (SI)
Old Dover Road, Blackheath, SE3
Tel: 01-858 8221
Headmaster: Miss S. M. Houlton
Required from January 1984, for two teachers in the SMILE course with the first school and Integrated Studies in the first three years willing to develop the relationship with associate subjects.

Post of Responsibility

STRAVINSKY'S STOLAVE'S CE (SI)
New Kent Road, SE14 4AN
Tel: 01-487 1843
Roll: 500
Headmaster: Miss A. C. Davies
Required from January 1984 or as a Mathematics teacher, Scale 2, with experience and appropriately qualified in the use of SMILE. The person appointed will cover the school's Mathematics, Science and Technology. The person appointed will cover the school's Mathematics, Science and Technology. The person appointed will cover the school's Mathematics, Science and Technology.

DAY SCHOOLS

CHARLTON PARK (PH)
Charlton Park Road, SE7
Tel: 01-854 6259
Roll: 130 (all ages)
Headmaster: S. G. F. Nye
Required from Easter 1984, Teacher in Charge of the day school.

SECONDARY SCHOOLS

REDBRIDGE
LONDON BOROUGH OF REDBRIDGE
LONDON ROAD SCHOOL
LONDON Road, Redbridge, Essex
Tel: 01-553 2424
Head: R. J. M. Marshall, M.A., F.R.E.A.
Required from January 1984 a temporary teacher of English to take over the school's English department. The post calls for a teacher with sound knowledge of language development and teaching by direct observation and prepared to teach through school particularly sought. Re-advertisement.

By Subject Classification

Arts and Design
HEADS OF DEPARTMENT
HAMPSHIRE
25 Prebend Street, Hillingdon, NI
Tel: 01-262 8123
Roll: 110 (all ages mixed)
Headmaster: Mrs. Jan Lewis
Required from April 1984 teacher, Scale 3.5, to take responsibility for curriculum development. See place.

Scale 1 Posts

REDBRIDGE
LONDON BOROUGH OF REDBRIDGE
LONDON ROAD SCHOOL
LONDON Road, Redbridge, Essex
Tel: 01-553 2424
Head: R. J. M. Marshall, M.A., F.R.E.A.
Required from January 1984 a temporary teacher of English to take over the school's English department. The post calls for a teacher with sound knowledge of language development and teaching by direct observation and prepared to teach through school particularly sought. Re-advertisement.

Scale 2 Posts and above

REDBRIDGE
LONDON BOROUGH OF REDBRIDGE
LONDON ROAD SCHOOL
LONDON Road, Redbridge, Essex
Tel: 01-553 2424
Head: R. J. M. Marshall, M.A., F.R.E.A.
Required from January 1984 a temporary teacher of English to take over the school's English department. The post calls for a teacher with sound knowledge of language development and teaching by direct observation and prepared to teach through school particularly sought. Re-advertisement.

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MISCELLANEOUS

WOLVERHAMPTON
THROUGH COUNCIL
EDUCATION COMMITTEE
Multi-Cultural Education
Service
Co-ordinator: Community
Language Programme
3

Applications are invited from suitably qualified persons for the post of Co-ordinator. The successful candidate will be required to coordinate the Multi-Cultural Education Service. The post is full-time, permanent and involves travel within the region. The successful candidate will be required to have a minimum of five years' experience in a similar post. The salary is £11,000 per annum. Applications should be sent to the Director of Education, Wolverhampton City Council, 100 Victoria Road, Wolverhampton, WV1 1JL. Closing date: 15th December 1983.

Application forms are available from the Director of Education, Education Department, Civic Centre, St Peter's Square, Wolverhampton WV1 1JL, to whom they should be sent. The successful candidate will be required to have a minimum of five years' experience in a similar post. The salary is £11,000 per annum. Applications should be sent to the Director of Education, Wolverhampton City Council, 100 Victoria Road, Wolverhampton, WV1 1JL. Closing date: 15th December 1983.

Wolverhampton is an equal opportunity employer and disabled people are encouraged to apply. Applications should be sent to the Director of Education, Education Department, Civic Centre, St Peter's Square, Wolverhampton WV1 1JL, to whom they should be sent. The successful candidate will be required to have a minimum of five years' experience in a similar post. The salary is £11,000 per annum. Applications should be sent to the Director of Education, Wolverhampton City Council, 100 Victoria Road, Wolverhampton, WV1 1JL. Closing date: 15th December 1983.

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Outdoor Education

BRYN DU LLANBERIS

Mountain, Woodland Coastal, Water, Adventure & Environmental Activities.
The Centre for Mountain Ventures Ltd, Bryn Du Llanberis, Llanberis, Gwynedd, LL55 2JH. Tel: 051-254 5733. 680000

ARNOLD-WHEATON
FULL-TIME
REPRESENTATIVE

Arnold-Wheaton publishers have a vacancy for a full-time educational representative in the area of the East Midlands and Home Counties North. This is a new and very busy Sales Department formed from the amalgamation of the publishing activities of A. Wheaton and Co. and E. J. Arnold and Son Ltd. Suitable applicants will be enthusiastic, be self-motivated, able to work on their own initiative and determined to make a real success of their career. A sound knowledge of the educational system and/or previous selling experience is essential. Please write giving brief details of career to date to:

Mr B. W. King, Personnel Department
E. J. Arnold and Son Ltd, (Arnold-Wheaton)
Parkdale Lane, Dewsbury Road
Leeds LS11 6TD
Tel: Leeds (0532) 772112

GENERAL SYNOD
OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND
BOARD OF EDUCATION

The BOARD OF EDUCATION invites applications for a senior post with responsibility at a national level for

Advising in Work Among Children

The post is vacant due to the appointment of the Rev. Barry Miller as Lecturer in Religious Studies at the West Midlands College of Higher Education.

The main focus is work among the under-14s in parish and voluntary contexts.

Women or men (lay or ordained) with relevant qualifications and experience, capable of innovative work in a challenging field are invited to apply by Friday, 2nd December, 1983.

The post is on a salary scale from £11,329 to £13,768 (including London Weighting allowance of £1,250 per annum).

For application form and job description please write to or telephone: Miss Anne Holt, Personnel Officer, Church House, Dean's Yard, London SW1P 3NZ. Tel: 01-222 9011, Ext. 351.

Interviews will be held in London on 20th January, 1984.

CUMBRIA
OUTDOOR EDUCATION
CENTRE
WILKINSON 25 973

Required to direct an additional team of instructors, programme development and coaching. The successful candidate must have been employed for 5 years. Applications to: Mr Brian Wilkinson, Outdoor Education Centre, 100 Victoria Road, Preston, Lancs. PR1 2JL. 680000

DEVON
SKENN LODGE OUTDOOR
CENTRE

Multi-activity and specialist courses from 23. 1 & 2 free places. Run by teachers for children and young people. Courses tailored to your requirements. Applications to: Mr John Skenn, Skenn Lodge, Devon. 02372 3552. 680000

DEVON
THE RIVER DART
CENTRE

Multi-activity and specialist courses from 23. 1 & 2 free places. Run by teachers for children and young people. Courses tailored to your requirements. Applications to: Mr John Skenn, Skenn Lodge, Devon. 02372 3552. 680000

HAMPSHIRE
CALISTO ACTIVITIES
CENTRE

Outdoor pursuits, multi-activity and specialist courses from 23. 1 & 2 free places. Run by teachers for children and young people. Courses tailored to your requirements. Applications to: Mr John Skenn, Skenn Lodge, Devon. 02372 3552. 680000

WALES
RIDING FOR SCHOOLS

Britain's foremost residential riding school. The Centre offers a full range of riding and horse care courses for schools. The Centre is situated in the heart of the Welsh countryside. Applications to: Mr John Skenn, Skenn Lodge, Devon. 02372 3552. 680000

FREE inspection week-
end for teachers and
parents. 1984. 1985. 1986. 1987. 1988. 1989. 1990. 1991. 1992. 1993. 1994. 1995. 1996. 1997. 1998. 1999. 2000. 2001. 2002. 2003. 2004. 2005. 2006. 2007. 2008. 2009. 2010. 2011. 2012. 2013. 2014. 2015. 2016. 2017. 2018. 2019. 2020. 2021. 2022. 2023. 2024. 2025. 2026. 2027. 2028. 2029. 2030. 2031. 2032. 2033. 2034. 2035. 2036. 2037. 2038. 2039. 2040. 2041. 2042. 2043. 2044. 2045. 2046. 2047. 2048. 2049. 2050. 2051. 2052. 2053. 2054. 2055. 2056. 2057. 2058. 2059. 2060. 2061. 2062. 2063. 2064. 2065. 2066. 2067. 2068. 2069. 2070. 2071. 2072. 2073. 2074. 2075. 2076. 2077. 2078. 2079. 2080. 2081. 2082. 2083. 2084. 2085. 2086. 2087. 2088. 2089. 2090. 2091. 2092. 2093. 2094. 2095. 2096. 2097. 2098. 2099. 2100. 2101. 2102. 2103. 2104. 2105. 2106. 2107. 2108. 2109. 2110. 2111. 2112. 2113. 2114. 2115. 2116. 2117. 2118. 2119. 2120. 2121. 2122. 2123. 2124. 2125. 2126. 2127. 2128. 2129. 2130. 2131. 2132. 2133. 2134. 2135. 2136. 2137. 2138. 2139. 2140. 2141. 2142. 2143. 2144. 2145. 2146. 2147. 2148. 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